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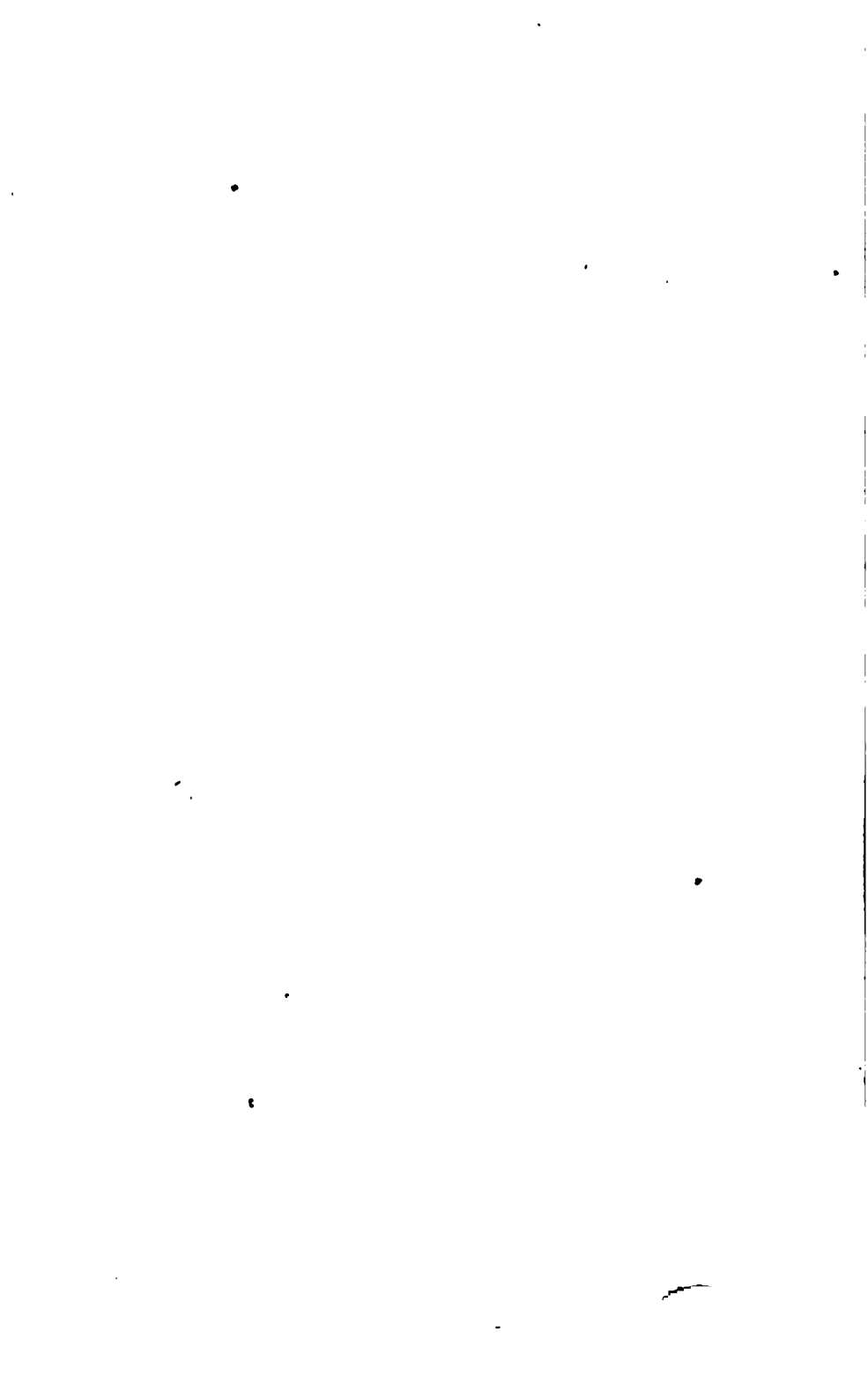
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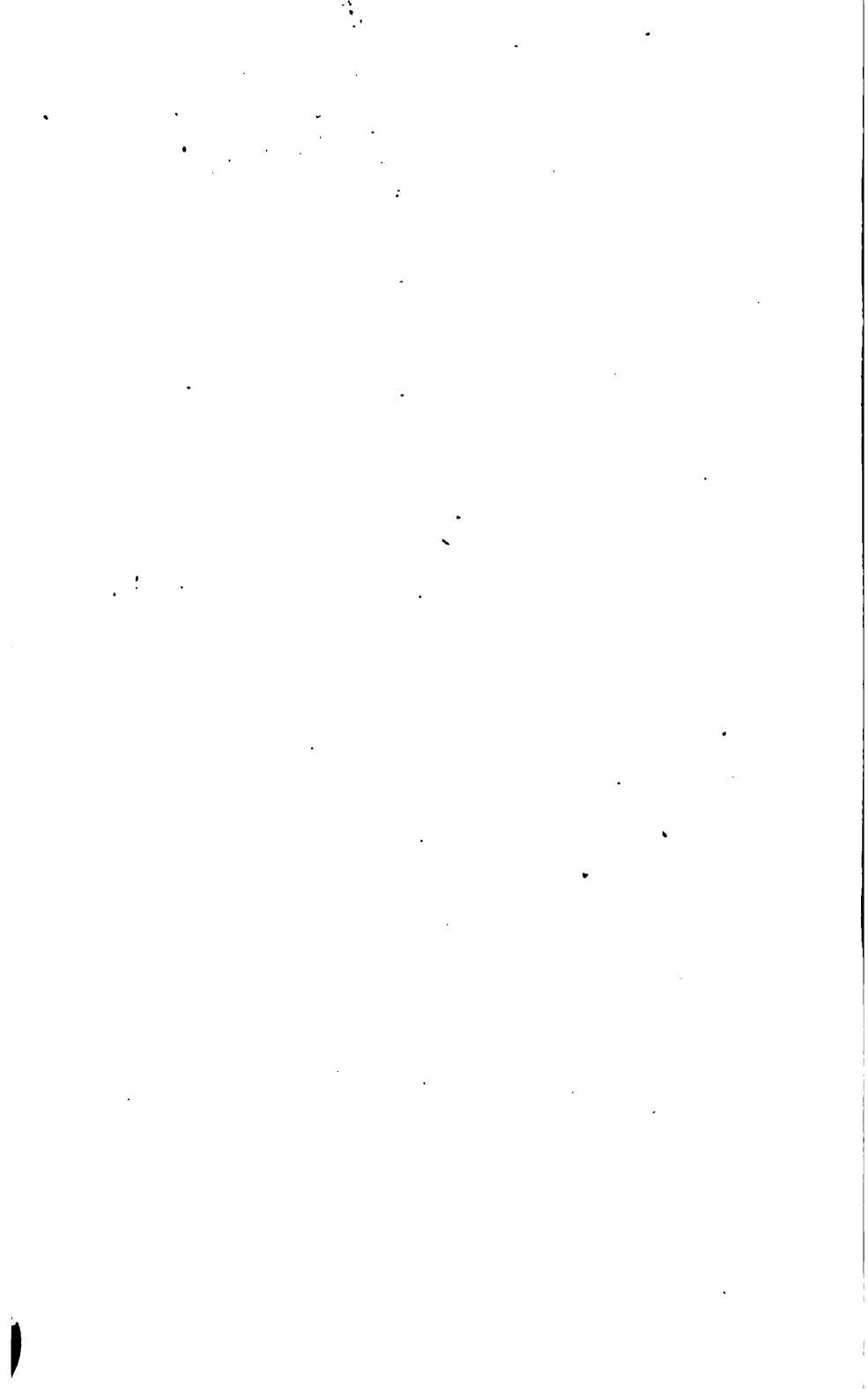
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H I S T O R Y
OF THE
BOROUGHs OF GREAT BRITAIN,
AND THE
CINQUE PORTS.

[Entered at Stationers Hall.]



Oldfield, Thomas Hinton Busley

AN ENTIRE AND COMPLETE
H I S T O R Y,
POLITICAL AND PERSONAL,
OF THE
BOROUGHs OF GREAT BRITAIN;
TOGETHER WITH
THE CINQUE PORTS.
TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,
AN ORIGINAL SKETCH
OF
CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS,
FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD UNTIL THE PRESENT TIME;
ILLUSTRATED BY
A VARIETY OF NOTES AND REFERENCES.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOLUME III.

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M. DCC. XCII.



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HISTORY

OF THE

BOROUGHES OF GREAT-BRITAIN.

SURREY.

THIS county is independent of absolute controul; and, although it is at present represented by the brothers of peers, it is not under the immediate influence of either. In the year 1775, Sir Joseph Mawbey, bart. upon the death of Mr. Scawen, one of their representatives, became a candidate, in the interest of the yeomenry. He was opposed by the late Sir Francis Vincent, who had the support of the aristocracy, and by the Hon. William Norton, now Lord Grantley, who had the countenance of the administration of that day; but, notwithstanding these powerful

VOL. III. B exertions

exertions, which were used against him, he was finally victorious. The next instance that the freeholders gave of their independence was, in the contest between Admiral Keppel and the Hon. Thomas Onslow, when the former gentleman was returned by a majority of six hundred. Upon the admiral's being called up to the house of lords, Lord Althorp, now Earl Spencer, was chosen in his stead. The death of this nobleman's father occasioned another vacancy for this county, when Sir Robert Clayton was elected. This gentleman however gave so much umbrage to the people, and became so unpopular, from the support which he gave the Coalition, that in the year 1734 the Hon. William Norton was the object of their choice, and Sir Robert was thrown out. At the last election there was a cross poll; the three candidates opposed each other; when Lord William Russell and Captain Finch were elected by a considerable majority.

ANCIENT STATE.

The county of Surrey was thus called from its Saxon name Suthrea; a name that owed its origin to the Saxon word *Suth*, which signifies
south,

South, and *Rea*, a river, which it received from its being situated on the south side of the Thames. It is bounded on the east by Kent; on the south, by Sussex; on the west, by Berkshire and Hampshire; and on the north, by Middlesex: extending thirty-eight miles in length, from east to west, twenty-three miles from north to south, and one hundred and twenty miles in circumference.

This county is part of the territory inhabited by the *Regni*, in the time of the Romans. Many considerable antiquities have been found here, particularly the famous Military Way, called Stone-street, which is still visible in many places. Here have also been found Roman tiles, medals, coins, and urns, and the remains of Roman camps and towns.

Under the Saxon heptarchy this county belonged first to the kingdom of the South Saxons; but it was at length conquered, and became united to the kingdom of the West Saxons.

Surrey is divided into thirteen hundreds. It lies in the province of Canterbury, and diocese of Winchester, and has one hundred and forty

parishes, in which are thirteen market-towns; viz. Chertsey, Croydon, Dorking, Epsom, Ewel, Farnham, Godalming, Guildford, Haslemere, Kingston, Ryegate, Southwark, and Woking, besides two ancient boroughs, which have no markets, viz. Bletchingly, and Gatton. It sends fourteen members to parliament, viz. two knights of the shire for the county, and two members for each of the following boroughs,—Southwark, Guilford, Ryegate, Haslemere, Bletchingly, and Gatton.

SOUTHWARK.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS borough is **not** under influence in any degree, or of any kind, owing to its great population and opulence, and the right of election being vested in the inhabitants, housekeepers, paying scot and lot. — It consists of five parishes, St. John's, St. Olave's, St. Thomas's, St. George's, and St. Saviour's. Christ-church parish formed a part of this borough by the charter of Edward VI. but owing to disuse it has lost the privilege of voting, as well as great part of the parish of St. Saviour,

Saviour, which is called the Clink Liberty. The parish of Christ-church is on the south side of Blackfriars-bridge, and was formerly part of the parish of St. Saviour, but has been separated by act of parliament. This parish, in conjunction with the Clink Liberty, has undoubtedly a right to suffrages, in common with the other parishes of the borough; and it is in agitation to petition parliament, at a future election, for a re-establishment of those rights which have been lost for want of usage. Southwark is one of the twenty-six wards of the city of London, and is called, in the city records, the ward of Bridge Without, though it has not, in common with the other wards of the city, the election either of an alderman or common-council; the former being chosen by the court of aldermen, from amongst such of that body as have served the office of lord-mayor; and the choice usually falls upon the senior.

The inhabitants have lately petitioned the corporation of London, for the same liberty which is exercised by all the other wards, of electing their own aldermen and common-council; and as the city of London have lately obtained a decision,

in the court of Common Pleas, which confirms to them the privilege of an exclusive jurisdiction over this borough, it is presumed that this ancient right will be extended to them; a right which has its foundation in justice, and which ought to be a leading feature in every constitution which has for its object the liberty, security, and prosperity of the community at large.

ANCIENT STATE,

Southwark, which, though generally considered as a part of London, we have reserved for this county, is so extensive and populous, that few cities or market-towns of England exceed it either in the number of its houses or inhabitants; it extending, like London, along the banks of the Thames, joining several villages which were formerly at a considerable distance, particularly Horsleydown and Rotherhithe on the east, and Lambeth on the west. From north to south it extends, in the broadest part, from London bridge to Newington Butts; but what is more properly termed Southwark, is included in the parishes of St. John, St. Olave, St. Saviour, St. Thomas, St. George, and Christ-church, all of which are very extensive.

St.

St. Olave's, Southwark, which is of considerable antiquity, is mentioned so early as the year 1281 ; but part of the old church falling down in 1736, the parishioners applied to parliament for power to rebuild it, and the present structure was erected in 1739. It is a rectory in the gift of the crown, and the incumbent's profits are said to amount to above 400*l.* a year.

St. Saviour's, also called St. Mary Overies, is a very ancient church, seated to the south-west of the bridge foot. In the place where it stands was a priory of nuns, founded by one Mary, a virgin, the owner of a ferry over the Thames, before London-bridge was built. This priory was some time after converted into a college of priests ; but in the year 1106 it was refounded by the bishop of Winchester and two Norman knights, for canons regular ; and from its dedication to the Virgin Mary, and its situation, was called St. Mary Overie, that is, St. Mary over the river. This edifice being destroyed by fire, about the year 1207, was soon after rebuilt ; and Peter de Rupibus, bishop of Winchester, added to it a spacious chapel, which he dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen. The monastery and conventual church

were rebuilt in the reigns of Richard II. and Henry IV. and, at the general suppression, were surrendered to Henry VIII. upon which the parishes of St. Mary Magdalen and St. Margaret purchased the conventual church of king Henry, and were the next year united by act of parliament; and the church being then repaired, was called by the new name of St. Saviour. This church is a rectory in the gift of the parish; and the profits arising to the two chaplains, are said to amount to upwards of 300l. per annum.

St. Thomas's, which is seated on the north side of St. Thomas's street, was erected for the use of the hospital of the same name; but the number of houses and inhabitants near the hospital greatly increasing, this church was rendered parochial, and a chapel erected in the hospital, for the use of the patients. This church is neither a rectory nor a vicarage, but a kind of impropriation, in the gift of the hospital.

St. George's stands at the south-east corner of St. Margaret's hill. There was a church in this place before the year 1122, which was taken
down

down in 1734, and the present structure was finished in 1736. This church is a rectory in the gift of the crown, worth to the incumbent about 220l. a year.

Christ-church, which is situated by the west side of the road, near the foot of Black-friars bridge, is a regular and well constructed brick building, erected with little expence, since the year 1737, when the foundation of the old church gave way. This church is a rectory, the patronage of which is in the heirs and assigns, of John Marshal, of the borough of Southwark, gent. who caused the old church to be erected, by leaving in the year 1627 the sum of 700l. for that purpose, with an estate of 60l. a year towards the support of the minister: and the inhabitants applying to parliament in 1706, it was made a distinct parish, independent of that of St. Saviour's.

To these churches we shall add those of St. Mary Magdalen Bermondsey, and St. Mary Rotherhithe, which are joined to the east end of this extensive borough. The former is situated on the south-west corner of Bermondsey-street,

street, vulgarly called Barnaby - street, and is dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen, the sister of Lazarus. It appears, from the Conqueror's survey, that a church of the same name was situated on the same spot, in the time of the Saxons; but the present structure was erected in 1680. The advowson belongs to lay patrons, and the profits of the incumbent are said to amount to about 200*l.* per annum. St. Mary Rotherhithe is seated near the bank of the Thames. The old church had stood about two hundred years, when being in a ruinous condition, the inhabitants applied to parliament in 1736, for leave to pull it down; and the present structure was finished in 1739. This church is a rectory in the gift of a lay patron, and the profits arising to the incumbent are said to amount to above 150*l.* a year. St. John the Evangelist is one of the fifty new churches ordered to be built by act of parliament, and was finished in 1732; when the district of Horesleydown, being separated from St. Olave's, was, by act of parliament, constituted its parish. The sum of 3500*l.* was likewise granted by parliament, to be laid out in lands, tenements, &c. in fee-simple, and the churchwardens to pay the rector the additional sum of 60*l.* to be raised by fees arising from burials.

Southwark

Southwark is mentioned in history in the year 1052, when we are told that Earl Godwin arrived there with a powerful fleet, and having cast anchor till the return of the tide, passed London-bridge without opposition, in order to engage the royal navy, which consisted of fifty ships of war, lying opposite to Westminster. However, affairs being accommodated between the king and the earl, the latter returned without coming to an engagement.

The borough of Southwark was governed by its own bailiff till the year 1327, when the city of London, finding great inconvenience from the escape of the malefactors thither, out of the reach and cognizance of the city magistrates, obtained a grant, by which the mayor of London was constituted bailiff of Southwark, and impowered to govern it by his deputy. However, the inhabitants, some time after, recovered their former privileges, which they enjoyed till King Edward VI. granted Southwark to the city of London, for the sum of 647l. 2s. 1d.; and about a month after the passing of this patent, Southwark was made one of the city wards, named Bridge Ward Without, in consideration of the city's paying to the

the crown an additional sum of 500 marks; upon which, the number of aldermen was increased from twenty-five to twenty-six, a new one being chosen to govern that borough. Hence Southwark has ever since been considered as subject to the lord-mayor, who has under him a steward and bailiff, the former of whom regularly holds a court of record, in the hall on St. Margaret's hill, for all debts, damages, and trespasses within his limits; and the lord mayor proclaims a fair held at Southwark on the 19th of September.

It is divided into two parts; the Borough Liberty, in which the lord mayor's steward or bailiff holds the above courts; and the Clink, or Manor of Southwark, which is subdivided into the Great Liberty, the Guildhall, and the King's Manor; for each of which subdivisions, a court-leet is held, where the constables, ale-conners, and flesh-measures, are chosen, and other business transacted. The Clink Liberty is under the jurisdiction of the bishop of Winchester, who, besides a court-leet, keeps a court of record here, by his steward and bailiff, for pleas of debt, damages, and trespasses.

passes. Court-leets are also kept at Bermondsey and Rotherhithe.

The military government of Southwark is under the lord-lieutenant of the county of Surrey, and eleven deputy-lieutenants.

OPPOSITE the west end of St. George's church was anciently a magnificent structure, belonging to the Duke of Suffolk, which coming to Henry VIII. he erected a mint in it for the coining of money ; it being afterwards pulled down and converted into streets, they still retained the name ; and it being a privileged place, it became a harbour for bankrupts and debtors, to which they fled, in order to defraud their creditors.

Though the privilege of this place was taken away in the reign of William III. they still kept their station, in defiance of the laws, and of the civil power, till an act of parliament was made in the latter end of the reign of king George I. which obliged them to disperse.

In

In this borough were anciently a number of brothels, called the stews, situated on the bank-side, Southwark, and licensed by the bishop of Winchester. At first there were eighteen of these houses, but afterwards twelve were only allowed. They stood in a row, and had signs on their fronts facing the Thames, which were not hung out, but painted on the walls; as the Cardinal's Hat, the Cross-keys, the Bell, the Castle, the Swan, the Boar's Head, &c. These houses were under very strict regulations, confirmed by act of parliament in the reign of Henry II. which were to be observed, under the penalty of suffering great pains and punishments. No single woman, desirous of forsaking her sins, was to be kept against her will; and every lewd woman was forbidden the rites of the church, and denied Christian burial, if she was not reconciled to the church before her death. Hence there was a plot of ground, termed the single woman's church-yard, appointed for these lewd women, at a distance from the parish-church. These lewd houses were put down by order of King Henry VIII. in the year 1546, when it was proclaimed by sound of trumpet, that the stews
should

should be no longer privileged and used as common brothels.

CORPORATION.

It is under the jurisdiction of the corporation of London.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1702, 10 Nov. Is only in the inhabitants thereof paying scot and lot.

1714, 29 June. "That the persons inhabiting in the Mint, or rules of the Queen's-Bench, in the borough of Southwark, and paying a rent of ten pounds per annum, or upwards, have not a right to vote, though they do pay scot and lot within the said borough."

It passed in the negative.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The bailiff.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Nineteen hundred.

BLETCHINGLY.

BLETCHINGLY.

THIS borough, which consists of about sixty small houses, is a proper companion to Gatton, from which it is not more than three miles distant. The right of voting is burgage-tenure, and the lord of the manor's bailiff was the returning-officer; but by the last resolution of the house of commons in 1723, he was deprived of that office; and the borough has now the singularity of sending two members to parliament, without a mayor, constable, or any other legal officer, who can claim the exclusive exercise of that authority. We have several instances of boroughs without electors, but this is the only one that presents itself without a returning-officer.

Sir Robert Clayton is sole proprietor of the majority of burgage-tenures, and of course has the appointment of the representatives.

ANCIENT STATE.

Bletchingly is a borough-town, which has no market, though it sends two members to parliament.

liament. It had a castle, which was long since demolished by the forces of Henry III. at which time the town itself was laid in ruins. The place where the castle stood is now a coppice; but some remains of it are still visible, particularly a piece of a wall, five feet thick, from whence there is a prospect into Suffex and Hampshire.

This place sent to Parliament 23 Edward I.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

Is in the borough-holders only, without the bailiff.

RETURNING OFFICER.

NONE.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

The number of burgage-holds are 90, but are all the property of an individual.

PATRON.

Sir Robert Clayton.

RYEGATE.

THE right of voting is in the freeholders of the borough. The Earl of Hardwicke and Lord Somers have bought up all the freeholds in it, each of whom appoints an attorney in the town as their agents, as well in elections as other business. The property being nearly equally divided between these two noblemen, each procures the return of one member for a near relation or a particular friend. The former nobleman's brother, the Hon. Joseph Sydney Yorke, and the latter's son, the Hon. John Somers Cocks, are the present members. This circumstance alone is sufficient to prove where, and in what degree, influence and authority prevail here, and how far the electors are suffered to exercise their judgment and their choice in the election of their representatives.

ANCIENT STATE.

Reygate, or Ryegate, is a town seated in a pleasant valley called Holmsdale, from the holm-trees that abound in it. The name of this town, which

which in Saxon signifies the course or channel of a river, was given to it from its being seated on a branch of the river Mole. There was here a very ancient castle, which, in the time of the civil wars, was in the possession of Lord Monson, who forfeited it to the crown for treasonable practices. Charles II. at his restoration, granted the manor and castle to his brother the Duke of York; and at the Revolution, King William granted them to Lord Somers, upon whose death it came to James Cox, esq. who was then one of the representatives of this town in parliament. The ruins of this castle, which was built in the time of the Saxons, are still visible, particularly a long vault, which has a room at the end of it, in which, we are told, the barons who took arms against king John had their private meetings.

This town gives title of baron to the Earl of Peterborough.

Under the hill, adjoining to the south side of the town, is a great house, which was formerly a priory of Black Canons, founded by William Warren, earl of Surrey, about the year 1245. It was dedicated to the Virgin Mary and the

Holy Cross; and at the dissolution, its revenue was valued at 77l. 14s. 11d. per annum. It was given to the Earl of Nottingham, and was afterwards sold to Sir John Parsons, lord-mayor of London, and was lately in the possession of Mr. Parsons, Sir John's grandson.

This borough sent 23 Edw. I.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

In the freeholders.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The bailiff.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About 200 freeholds; now the property of the Earl of Hardwicke and Lord Somers.

PATRONS.

Earl of Hardwicke and Lord Somers.

GUILDFORD.

GUILDFORD.

THE right of election in this borough is of a very peculiar kind, and differs from all others in the kingdom, being in the freemen and freeholders paying scot and lot, and resident in the town.

The majority of the freeholds is the property of Lord Onslow and Lord Grantley, and the number of voters not exceeding one hundred. They have been considered for some years past to have had the nomination of its members, until the last general election, when Mr. Sumner opposed the brother of the latter, and was successful only by a majority of three votes; but it is supposed that, at a future election, Lord Grantley will regain his former interest. The corporation of this town, which consists of a mayor, recorder, seven aldermen, and an indefinite number of bailiffs, is in the interest of Lord Onslow, who has very liberally provided for several of them in different departments under government. This place, like Cirencester, Shrewsbury, Lewes,

&c. &c. is not more than half of it within the limits of the borough.

ANCIENT STATE.

Guilford, or Guildford, which is seated on the river Wey, thirty miles south-west of London, was in the Saxon times a royal villa, given by king Alfred to his nephew Ethelwald. The ruinous walls of an old castle, which are of a prodigious thickness, are still visible. This town is said to have been the residence of the South-Saxon kings. In 1036, prince Alfred, the son of king Etheldred, coming out of Normandy, with six hundred attendants, to claim the crown of England, is said to have been seized, and very ill treated, by the treachery of Godwin, earl of Kent. After the conquest, it continued a considerable place; and here king John kept his birth-day, probably in the castle. In the year 1216, this castle, with many others, was taken by Lewis, dauphin of France. In 1267, the custody of it was committed to William Aquillon, sheriff of Surrey and Suffex. Since that time it has probably been neglected, and gradually sunk into ruins.

This

This town, which was incorporated by King Henry I. gives the title of earl to the noble family of North, and sends two members to parliament.

This being the county-town, the assizes are frequently held here, and always the election for knights of the shire.

This borough sent members to parliament anno 23 Ed. I.

CORPORATION.

By charter of Henry VIII. it is governed by a mayor, seven magistrates, and sixteen bailiffs.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1699, 24 April. Is only in the freemen and freeholders paying scot and lot, and resident in the town.

1710, 3 Feb. It was agreed that one who had served seven years to a freeman, was, *ipso facto*, a freeman.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About one hundred and twenty.

PATRONS.

Lord Onslow and Lord Grantley.

GATTON.

THIS borough, which now consists only of two houses, was the property of the unfortunate Sir George Colebrooke : at the time of his failure, it was sold by the assignees, under his commission, to Lord Newhaven, who afterwards disposed of it to Messrs. Percy and Graham. Since the year 1786, it has been purchased and repurchased by three or four different persons, and is now the property of William Currie, esq. one of its present members, and Robert Ladbroke, esq. The returning officer is the constable appointed at the court-leet of the two proprietors. In this case, the constituent and representative body, who are the same in number, may also possibly be the same persons, as they would have the power to elect each other. This, among many others,

is

is a striking instance of the present fallacious and inadequate state of representation, and shews the indispensable necessity of applying some immediate remedy to an evil of such an enormous magnitude.

ANCIENT STATE.

This place, which is of very ancient date, was formerly a considerable town, though now reduced to a small village. From the number of coins and other antiquities found here, it is supposed to have been a Roman station. It was once destroyed by the Danes; and old authors tell us it was formerly a market-town; but we have not been able to trace the day on which the market was held.

This village first began to send members
29 Hen. VI.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1628, 26 March. Is in the inhabitants; and the return made by them being adjudged good, was (by the then petitioner) insisted to be in the inhabitants not receiving alms, and in the freeholders having such freehold in their own occupation.

15 Dec.

1696, December 15. Was (by the then sitting member) insisted to be in the freeholders and inhabitants paying scot and lot; and he was adjudged duly elected.

RETURNING OFFICER,

The lord's constable,

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

TWO.

PATRONS.

Robert Ladbroke, esq. and William Currie, esq.

HASLEMERE.

THE right of election here is in the freeholders of messuages, lands, or tenements, lying within the borough and manor of Haslemere. These freeholds, in which the right is vested, were formerly the property of the families of Oglethorpe and Molyneux; of whom they were purchased by Mr. Chandler, an attorney of Guildford, who sold them to the Earl of Lonsdale, the present proprietor of the borough.

This borough has been formerly the cause of much litigation and contest. A petition of William Burke, esq. and Henry Kelly, esq. was tried by a committee of the house of commons, in 1775. against the return of Thomas More Molyneux, esq. and Sir Merrick Burrell, the sitting members. The complaint was against splitting and dividing freeholds ; a practice very common in all freehold and burgagehold boroughs, where the property is not possessed by an individual. The committee determined in favour of the sitting members.

ANCIENT STATE.

Haslemere, which stands on the borders of Suffex, forty-one miles south-west of London, is an ancient place, and had formerly seven parish-churches, which were destroyed by the Danes, though now it has no more than one, which is only a chapel of ease to Chiddingfold, a village about two miles to the east of it. It is an ancient borough by prescription.

This borough first began to return members anno 27 Eliz.

RIGHT

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1661, May 20. The inhabitant freeholders in the borough have only votes in elections.

1698, Feb. 9. Was agreed to be in the freeholders resident within the borough.

1755, April 24. In the determination of 1661, by the word "*freeholders*" is meant only freeholders of messuages, lands, or tenements, lying within the borough and manor of Haslemere, whether the same pay to the lord of the said borough and manor or not, exclusive of any lands or tenements, which are, or have been, parcel of the waste ground of the said borough and manor, or many messuages or buildings, which are or shall be standing, or being thereon.

1713, March 3 and 4. Petition of Mr. Oglethorpe rejected, for not being signed by himself. The like relating to Wigan.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The bailiff, who is annually chosen at the lord's leet.

NUMBER

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About sixty.

PATRON.

Earl of Lonsdale.

SUSSEX.

POLITICAL CHARACTER

THIS county was considered formerly as entirely under the influence of aristocracy ; but the contrary to this was evinced in 1774. The independent part of the county, being at that time much dissatisfied with the conduct of administration, in attempting to procure a return for a candidate of their own nomination, contrary to the wishes of the people, exerted themselves in such a manner as convinced them that their unanimity and abilities, when called forth into action, would, when similar encroachments were made upon their rights, be equally certain, as well as deserving, of similar success.

They

They entered into voluntary subscriptions, for the support of their cause, and proposed Sir Thomas Spencer Wilson, bart. in opposition to Sir James Peachy, the court candidate. The contest was carried on with unabating diligence and vigour on both sides, for a continuation of twenty-eight days; when a great majority was declared in favour of Sir Thomas Spencer Wilson, in whose person the honest and independent yeomen of the county obtained an entire and complete victory over the mandates of ministerial despotism. There is, however, much aristocratical influence prevailing here, arising from the residencies and estates of the Duke of Richmond and Duke of Dorset, the Earl of Ashburnham, Earl of Abergavenny, the Earl of Egremont, and Lord Pelham. There has been no contested election for this county since 1774. The representation at present is divided; the Right Hon. Thomas Pelham voting uniformly with the opposition, and Charles Lenox, esq. with administration.

ANCIENT STATE.

Suffex, which is a corruption of the ancient Saxon name Suthsex, signifying the country of
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the South Saxons, formed, at the arrival of the Romans, a part of the territory of the Regni. After it was conquered by those invaders, they formed the Military Way called Stone-street, which has been traced out of Surrey, through this county, to Arundel; and at Villinghurst, south-west of Horsham, there are still noble remains of it. In this county they had several stations; Roman coins and pavements, with a large Roman camp, and other antiquities, have been found here. In the time of the Saxon heptarchy it constituted the principal part of the kingdom of the South Saxons; and upon the fall of that monarchy, it became subject to the kingdom of Mercia. About the year 800, Egbert, king of the West Saxons, having reduced the kingdoms of the heptarchy under his government, appointed certain earls to be governors of the several counties, and gave them a palatine jurisdiction; yet we do not find he appointed any here, though there were several earls who had large possessions in this county. In short, the Norman Conqueror, here, as in other counties, disposed of the most valuable estates of the Saxons, which he gave to his own kindred, and the great commanders of his army.

Suffex

Suffex is divided into fix rapes, which are general divisions peculiar to this county ; and each of these rapes is said to have anciently had its particular river, forest, and castle. These rapes are subdivided into sixty-five hundreds ; in which are contained one city, sixteen market-towns, and two ancient boroughs, which are ancient corporations, but have no market. These are the city of Chichester, with the market-towns of Arundel, Battel, Brighthelmstone, Cuckfield, East Grinstead, Hastings, Haylsam, Horsham, Lewes, Midhurst, Petworth, Rye, New Shoreham, Steyning, Terring, and Winchelsea, with the boroughs of Bramber and Seaford, that have no markets. It is seated in the province of Canterbury, and diocese of Chichester, contains three hundred and forty-two parishes, and sends twenty-eight members to parliament ; namely, two representatives for the county, two citizens for the city of Chichester, two burgessees for each of the following boroughs, Lewes, Horsham, New Shoreham, Midhurst, Arundel, East Grinstead, Steyning, Bramber, and two barons for each of the cinque-ports of Rye, Hastings, Winchelsea, and Seaford.

CHICHESTER.

CHICHESTER.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS city was many years under the dictation of the Duke of Richmond, whose political interference was submitted to with much reluctance by the electors. Upon the death of General Koppel, in 1782, an attempt was made to oppose the Duke's nomination of the Hon. Percy Windham, brother to the Earl of Egremont, but without success. Mr. Brian Edwards, who was the candidate in opposition to Mr. Windham, however, lost his election, by being in a minority of only eight votes. At the ensuing general election of 1784, the independent electors triumphed in the choice of George White Thomas, esq. one of the present representatives; and, at the last dissolution of parliament in 1790, they became powerful enough to carry both the members. Mr. Steele, the representative of the Duke of Richmond's interest, attempted to divide the phalanx of uninfluenced electors, by canvassing upon *his own interest*, without the appearance of aristocratical support; but this was found to be too insignificant, even to countenance the manœuvre. The friends of

Mr. Thomas, who were now become a decisive majority of the inhabitants, for the sake of preserving the peace and harmony of the city, and to avoid those ruinous expences which generally attend a contest with influence and power, made a voluntary offer of admitting the Duke of Richmond to recommend one of the members, if he would engage to leave the other to their own choice. This offer was accepted by his Grace: and Mr. Steele published a letter, disclaiming all pretensions to the honour he aspired at, upon the foundation of his own merits, and modestly acknowledged his gratitude to those of a superior source.

The corporation are all in the interest of the Duke of Richmond, who is high steward; and his brother, Lord George Henry Lenox, is one of the aldermen.

ANCIENT STATE.

Chichester is situated on the river Lavant, by which is surrounded on every side but the north, at the distance of sixty-three miles from London; it is a neat, compact city, of great antiquity; seeming

seeming to have been of some strength in the time of the Britons, when it was called *Caercei*. That it was a Roman station, the antiquities there leave no room to doubt. In digging a cellar under the corner house of St. Martin's lane, in the year 1723, a stone was dug up, with an inscription, which, though somewhat defaced by the pickaxes of the labourers, and broke into four pieces, plainly intimated, that it was part of the foundation of a temple, erected in the reign of the emperor Claudius, and dedicated to Neptune and Minerva. Close to which stone were discovered two stone walls three feet thick, one running north, the other east, and joining in an angle, which in all probability were part of the foundations of the above-mentioned temple. A great number of Roman coins have been found here, and in 1727, a curious piece of Roman pavement was discovered in the garden of the bishop's palace: these circumstances, with the appearance of a military way leading towards Southampton, induced Mr. Horsley to conclude that this city was the *Regnum* of Antoninus. It was rebuilt in the time of the Saxons by Cissa, the second king of the South Saxons, after it had been destroyed by some Saxon and Norwegian pirates:

the same prince also making it the place of his residence, and the capital of his kingdom, it obtained the name of Ciffan Ceaſter, which ſignifies the city of Ciffa, from which its preſent name is derived. When the kingdom of the South-Saxons was united to Eſſex, this place decayed; and about the time of the Norman conqueſt it contained only a hundred houſes. In the reign of William I. it was made a biſhop's ſee, and the ſecond biſhop erected a cathedral, which was ſoon after conſumed by fire; in the reign of Henry I. it was rebuilt, and ſuffered again by fire, in the reign of Richard I. when, not only the cathedral, but the greateſt part of the city, the biſhop's palace, and the houſes of the prebendaries, were conſumed. Selfrid, who was then biſhop, by his wealth and intereſt, reſtored the church and city to their former ſplendour, in which ſtate it ſtill remains, without having ſuffered any other diſaſters of the like kind. This cathedral, which is dedicated to the Virgin Mary, is a handſome, though ſmall ſtructure, and is adorned with a ſpire, much admired for its ſtrength and curious workmanſhip. The chapter conſiſts of a dean, two archdeacons, a treaſurer, a chancellor, thirty-one prebendaries,

a chanter, twelve vicars-choral, with other officers.

The city is encompassed by a stone wall, which has four gates, answering to the four cardinal points. From each of these gates is a street, that takes its name from the gate, and terminates in the market-place, which is in the center of the city.

Chichester had an ancient monastery before the conquest, dedicated to St. Peter; and there was also a nunnery, long before the see of Selsey was translated hither. In the north part of the city was an hospital for a master and several poor brethren, founded in the reign of Henry II. by William, dean of the cathedral. It was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and its revenue was valued, at the dissolution, at 35l. 6s. 3d. a year. Near the north gate of the city, was a monastery of Grey friars, founded in the reign of Henry III. Here was also a house of Black friars, dedicated to St. Mary and St. Vincent, said to have been founded by queen Eleanor, the wife of Edward I. likewise an hospital for leprous persons, dedi-

cated to St. James and St. Mary Magdalen, founded in the reign of king Richard I. but at the dissolution its revenue was valued at no more than 4l. 14s. 10d. per annum,

William Juxon, a pious and worthy prelate of the seventeenth century, successively bishop of Hereford and London, and archbishop of Canterbury, was born in the year 1582, at Chichester in Suffex. He received his education at Merchant-Taylors school, in London, and at St. John's college, in Oxford. For some time he applied himself to the civil law, and took the degree of bachelor in that faculty; but turning his thoughts afterwards to the study of divinity, he entered into orders, and became rector of Somerton, in the county of Oxford. In 1621 he was elected president of St. John's college; and in 1626 and 1627 executed the office of vice-chancellor of the university. About the same time he was appointed one of the chaplains in ordinary to king Charles I. who promoted him to the deanery of Worcester, and made him clerk of his closet. In 1633 he was nominated to the bishopric of Hereford; and before the expiration of the year, was translated to the see of London. So far his preferments
were

were suitable to his character, and seem not to have given umbrage to any person whatever; but his exaltation to the office of lord high treasurer, to which he was raised in 1635, and which he owed chiefly to the interest of archbishop Laud, excited the indignation of all the nobility. It was confessed, however, even by his enemies, that he executed that important post with an integrity and ability, which had hardly ever been displayed by any of his predecessors in office. Nor was he less remarkable for the mildness of his temper than for his other good qualities; and it was probably on account of this gentleness of his disposition, that he was suffered to continue till the year 1649 in the possession his bishopric. He had always enjoyed the favour of his sovereign, and retained it to the last. He attended his majesty upon the scaffold, and afterwards accompanied his body to Windsor. Upon the restoration of Charles II. he was promoted to the archbishopric of Canterbury, which he held about three years, and dying June the 4th, 1663, was interred in the chapel of St. John's college, Oxford.

This city, which is a county of itself, sent to parliament anno 23 Edward I.

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CORPORATION.

CORPORATION.

By charter of king James II. it is governed by a mayor, recorder, and 38 common-councilmen.

RIGHT OF ELECTION

In the inhabitants paying scot and lot.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Six hundred and twenty.

PATRON.

Duke of Richmond partially.

HORSHAM.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS town is among the first in the county in trade and number of inhabitants ; but the right of election here, as in many other towns of much larger extent in this country, is exclusively in the burgage-

burgage-holders. The number of these burgage-holds is twenty-five, fourteen of which are the property of Lady Irvine, and eleven are the Duke of Norfolk's. At the last general election, Timothy Shelley, esq. and Wilson Braddyll, esq. were candidates in the Duke's interest, and Lord William Gordon, and James Baillie, esq. were supported by Lady Irvine. The numbers on the poll were,

For Timothy Shelley, esq.	—	25
Wilson Braddyll, esq.	—	24
Lord William Gordon	—	20
James Baillie, esq.	—	9

In consequence of which the two former were returned.

Lord William Gordon and Mr. Baillie presented a petition to the house of commons; the merits of which being tried the present session before a committee of the whole house, the petitioners were declared to be duly elected, and ought to have been returned; and they accordingly took their seats.

The

The votes allowed to be legal by the committee were,

For Lord William Gordon	—	15
James Baillie, esq.	—	14
Timothy Shelley, esq.	—	10
Wilson Braddyll, esq.	—	9

The two bailiffs, who are the returning-officers, are annually chosen at the court-leet of the Duke of Norfolk, who is lord of the manor.

ANCIENT STATE.

Horsham, which is said to derive its name from Horfa, the brother of Hengist the Saxon, who probably resided here, is one of the largest towns in the county, situated thirty-three miles south by west of London, and has a very fine church, a county-gaol, and a well endowed free-school. It is a borough town, governed by two bailiffs, annually chosen at the court-leet of the Duke of Norfolk, by a jury, who return four to the steward of the court, out of which number he nominates two. The assizes are sometimes held here,

This borough sent to parliament at the same time Chichester did.

RIGHT

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1715, 16 June. Is in all such persons as have an estate of inheritance, or for life, in burgage-houses or burgage-lands lying within the said borough,

RETURNING OFFICERS.

The bailiffs.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Twenty-five,

PATRONS.

Duke of Norfolk, and Lady Viscountess Irvine.

MIDHURST.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS is a borough, which has the privilege of sending two members to parliament, although there is not a single house standing within the limits of it. The right of election is in one hundred and twenty burgage-holds, the situation of which is distinctly marked at present by the position of a large stone upon each of them.

There

There is no part of the town of Midhurst built upon these tenures ; they were the property of the late Lord Viscount Montagu, who made, at the time of an election, a temporary assignment of a part of them, either to some of his domestics or particular friends, for the purpose of having those members returned that he should nominate. The trustees of the estates of the present Lord sold these burgage-holds to the Earl of Egremont for forty thousand guineas, whose brothers were returned for this borough at the last general election. How can these gentlemen be called representatives, when there is not so much as one solitary individual existing within the precincts of the place, to make a constituent body ? If the voice of the nation is only to be heard in the house of commons, how can that possibly happen, unless it be its real representative ? And whether we are governed contrary to our inclinations, or by persons to whom we have given no such commission, we are equally an enslaved people. The above instance is a sufficient conviction of the mockery of our representation, and of the want of some immediate radical cure for so great an evil.

ANCIENT STATE.

Midhurst, a Saxon name, which signifies Middle-wood, is a pretty large town, pleasantly situated on a hill, surrounded by several others. It is a borough by prescription, governed by a bailiff, annually chosen by a jury at the court-leet, and has sent members to parliament ever since the fourth year of the reign of king Edward II. in 1311.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

In the burgage-holders.

RETURNING OFFICERS.

The steward and bailiff.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

ONE.

PATRON.

The Earl of Egremont.

LEWES.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS town was never incorporated; and the right of voting here is in the inhabitants house-keepers

keepers paying scot and lot. This borough was formerly under the absolute controul of the late Duke of Newcastle. This influence his Grace acquired from the weight of property which he possessed here, and from the distribution of some employments under government, of which he was at that time sole manager. In 1768 the late Colonel Hay, of Glynde Bourne near this town, was recommended by the Duke, as one of the candidates for its representation; in consequence of which he obtained from the voters, a promise of their suffrages. Immediately after this transaction, the Duke thought proper to countermand his former recommendation, and accordingly withdrew his sanction from Colonel Hay, and gave it to Sir Thomas Miller. The people however thought themselves bound in honour to abide by their promises; and Colonel Hay, conceiving himself ill treated in the business, resolved to stand the poll. Upon the day of election, he was firmly supported by his friends, who gave him sixty single votes, and obtained for him so great a majority over his opponent, as to make him finally successful. In 1780 there was a cross poll, when the Hon. Henry Pelham, Colonel Hay, and Thomas Kemp, esq. of this borough, were candidates, each

each of whom stood upon his own separate interest. In this contest Mr. Hay was unsuccessful; and Mr. Kemp was returned by the interest which had always shewn itself hostile to that of Lord Pelham. In 1784 Sir Henry Blackman, knight, was put in nomination, to represent this town, by the famous Mr. Harben, of upstart notoriety, who, notwithstanding this profession of friendship, on the day of election deserted and cruelly betrayed him: upon which Sir Henry represented to the people the situation into which he had been led by the artifices of this man, in so pathetic and convincing a manner, that Mr. Harben was obliged instantly to quit the hall, amidst the hisses and murmurs of his fellow-townsmen. At the last general election there was an union between the leading men in the independent party, and those in the interest of Lord Pelham, which Mr. Shelly, who was countenanced by administration, opposed.

At the close of the poll the numbers were,

For the Hon. Henry Pelham — 154

Thomas Kemp, esq. — 149

Henry Shelly, jun. esq. — 88

Mr. Kemp, when he first offered himself a candidate, agreeable to the principles of the constitution,

tution, pledged himself to the constituents; as the late Alderman Bull did to the city of London, that he would accept of neither place, pension, gratuity, nor reward of any kind from any administration, while he should have the honour of representing them in parliament.

ANCIENT STATE.

Lewes, which is seated on an eminence on the west side of the river Ouse, on the edge of the South downs, fifty-one miles south of London, is a pleasant place, and one of the largest and most populous towns in the county. It was formerly fortified with a castle and walls, of which there are still some remains. King Athelstan appointed two mint-houses in this town; and in the reign of king Edward the Confessor, it had one hundred and twenty-seven burgesses. It is a borough by prescription, governed by two constables, annually chosen at the court-leet. Here, William de Warren, earl of Surrey, and the lady Gundreda his wife, in the year 1078, founded a priory of Cluniac monks, which was the first and principal house of the order in England: in after-times it had many noble benefactors, namely, the succeeding earls of Surrey and others, several of whom,

whom, with their ladies, were interred here. It continued a cell to the abbey of Cluny in Burgundy, till king Edward III. made it independent. At the general dissolution its revenues were valued by Dugdale at 920l. 4s. 6d. a year, and at 1091l. 9s. 6d. by Speed. It was granted, with all its appendages, to Thomas Lord Cromwell; since which time it has been in the possession of the Dukes of Dorset and Earls of Thanet, and lately belonged to Edward Trayton, esq. It had also a priory of Grey Friars, a monastery dedicated to St. James, for thirteen poor brethren and sisters, and an hospital dedicated to St. Nicholas, which at the time of the dissolution had thirteen poor brothers and sisters. This town is also famous in history for a bloody battle fought here between Henry III. and the barons, on the 14th of May, 1264. The royal army was divided into three bodies; that on the right commanded by prince Edward, the King of the Romans on the left, and Henry himself headed the main body. The barons army was divided into four bodies; the first was led by Henry de Montford, the Earl of Leicester's son; the Earl of Gloucester commanded the second; the Earl of Leicester, the third; and

the fourth, consisting of Londoners, was commanded by Nicolas Seagrave. Prince Edward began the fight by attacking the Londoners, who, not being able to stand so vigorous a charge, immediately fled, when the prince, resolving to revenge an affront offered to the queen his mother, by the London mob, pursued them about four miles, without giving them any quarter. Mean while the Earls of Leicester and Gloucester gained the same advantage over Henry and the King of the Romans, whose troops being put to flight, Henry surrendered himself to the Earl of Leicester, and Richard to the Earl of Gloucester, and were instantly conducted to the priory of Lewes, situated at the foot of the castle, which was kept by some of the king's troops. To this place the soldiers of the royal army fled, in order to secure themselves in the castle; but seeing the town in the power of the barons, the two kings made prisoners, and themselves surrounded on all sides, they threw down their arms, and surrendered at discretion. Prince Edward, returning in triumph from the pursuit of the Londoners, finding, to his great amazement, the royal army dispersed, and the two kings were taken prisoners, resolved to exert himself to set them at liberty; but

but his troops being too much intimidated to second his ardour, he was obliged to accept of conditions, and consent that himself, and Henry his cousin, son to the King of the Romans, should remain as hostages in the custody of the barons, till all their differences were settled by the authority of parliament.

This town sent to parliament 23 Edw. I.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1735, 8 May. Is in the inhabitants, being householders, paying scot and lot.

Agreed to by the house, *nem. con.*

RETURNING OFFICERS:

The constables.

NUMBER OF VOTERS:

About two hundred and forty.

PATRON.

Lord Pelham, partially.

SHOREHAM.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS borough has rendered itself more conspicuous than most others, by a remarkable scene of corruption, which was brought to light before a committee in the house of commons in the year 1771. The returning officer had returned a candidate with only 37 votes, in prejudice to another who had 87; of which he had queried 76, and made his return without examining the validity of the votes he had so queried.

It appeared, from the defence made by the officer, that a majority of freemen of that borough had formed themselves into a society, under the name of the Christian Club; the apparent ends of which institution were to promote acts of charity and benevolence, and to answer such other purposes as were suitable to the import of its name. Under this sanction of piety and religion, and the cover of occasional acts of charity, they profaned that sacred name, by making it a stake for carrying on the worst purposes; making a traffic of their oaths and consciences, and setting their borough to sale to the highest bidder; while the rest of the freemen were deprived of every legal benefit from their votes.

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The members of this society were bound to secrecy, and to each other, by oaths, writings, bonds with large penalties, and all the ties that could strengthen their compact; and carried on this traffic by the means of a select committee, who, under pretence of scruples of conscience, never appeared or voted at any elections themselves; but, having notwithstanding sold the borough, and received the stipulated price, they gave directions to the rest how to vote; and by this complicated evasion, the employers and their agents, having fully satisfied their conscience, shared the money as soon as the election was over, without any scruple..

The returning officer had belonged to this society; and having taken some disgust to his associates, he quitted the party. The majority of legal voters which he objected to, was, he said, in part owing to his experimental knowledge of their corruption, and partly founded upon several improper acts which had come within his knowledge as magistrate upon the late election; particularly an affidavit of a very considerable sum of money which had been distributed among them. Upon these grounds, though they had the hardiness to take the oath against bribery and corruption, he looked upon them as disqualified;

and having, besides, taken the opinion of counsel, which, it seems, coincided with his own, he returned the candidate who had the smaller number of votes, as they were free from these objections.

Upon these principles, and his not acting intentionally wrong, the officer rested his plea of justification for the illegality of his conduct. As the assumption of such an act of power by a returning officer, upon whatever principle it was founded, would, however, have been a precedent of the most dangerous tendency, he was accordingly taken into custody; but, in consideration of the circumstances in his favour, and of his bringing so infamous a combination to light, he was discharged, after receiving a reprimand, upon his knees, from the speaker, in the presence of the house.

As this combination was of too flagrant a nature to be overlooked, and the select committee had not power to proceed any further in it, they reported the whole matter to the house, and moved, that they would make a further inquiry into it. Though this met with an opposition from some of those who, having no good wishes for the late act
for

for regulating the trial of controverted elections, were glad of so early an opportunity to point out its inefficacy, and depreciate its merits; yet the general excellency of that law, notwithstanding any of its present deficiencies, which every day's experience would give new opportunities of supplying, carried with it such conviction as to be already well understood; and the motion for an inquiry was carried through without a division.

The allegations made by the returning officer having been as fully proved, in the course of this inquiry, as the nature of the case would admit, and entirely to the satisfaction of the house, a bill was at length brought in, to incapacitate 81 free-men of Shoreham, by name, from voting at elections of members to serve in parliament, and for the preventing bribery and corruption in that borough; and at the same time an address was ordered, for the attorney-general to prosecute the five members of the Christian Club who composed the committee which transacted the bargain, as to the sale of the borough at the last election.

The different transactions, however, consequent of this subject, ran through the whole session;

and it was not till the last day of it, that the bill received the royal assent. The members of the club were heard by counsel against it. Many doubts also arose as to the mode of punishment. It was proposed to disfranchise the borough; this, however, was thought too dangerous a precedent: others thought that the culprits should be left to the punishment of the law; but, though there was a clear conviction of their guilt, it was a matter of such a nature, as made the establishments of legal evidence very difficult; and if they escaped without some signal mark of reprobation, it would be an encouragement to the most barefaced corruption, when the whole kingdom saw that it could be done with impunity.

The 11th Geo. III. cap. 55, recites, in the preamble, that, "Whereas a wicked and corrupt society, calling itself the Christian Society, hath, for several years, subsisted in the borough of New Shoreham, in the county of Sussex, and consisted of a great majority of persons, having a right to vote at elections of members to serve in parliament for the said borough; and whereas it appears that the chief end of the institution of the said society was for the purpose of selling, from time to time,
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the seat or seats in parliament for the said borough : and whereas John Burnett, Charles Hannington, Thomas Haselgrove, Ralph Moor, Thomas Parsons, Thomas Snook, junior, Thomas Hannington, John Hannington, John Robinson, William Cheefman, George Browne, John Parsons, John Curl, Frederick Dean, William Dean, Samuel Tuppen, John Sawyers, Thomas Crowter, Thomas Pockney, Joseph Dedman, John Dean, John Whiting, William Stevens, John Bawcomb, Robert Parker, John Hogsflesh, John Purse, John Dean, Thomas Jennings, John Snook, junior, Richard Tilstone, William Turner, Walter Sawyers, Charles Mitchell, John Jarmand, John Wood, Friend Daniel, William Gratwick, Nathaniel Hillman, Thomas Roberts, John Ashman, William Coeter, Thomas Frost, Michael Smith, Richard Carver, Michael Durrant, Emery Churcher, Walter Broad, Richard Stoneham, James Bennett, Clement Freeman, William Jupp, Thomas Crowter, John Barnard, James Mitchell, James Millar, otherwise Miller, William Newnham, Jeffery Carver, Randall Button, James Carver, John Martin, John Dedman, senior, William Jennings, William Hards, Thomas Gear, William Rusbridge, Henry Robinson, and
Henry

Henry Hannington, were members of the said society: in order therefore to prevent such unlawful practices for the future, and that the said borough from henceforth be duly represented in parliament, be it enacted that the said parties shall be, and by virtue of this act are, from henceforth, incapacitated, and disabled from giving any vote at any election for choosing a member or members to serve in parliament. It is also enacted, That from henceforth it shall and may be lawful to and for every freeholder, being above the age of one and twenty years, who shall have, within the rape of Bramber, in the said county of Sussex, a freehold of the clear yearly value of forty shillings, to give his vote at every election of a burghers or burghesses to serve in parliament for the said borough of New Shoreham.

“And it is further enacted, That the right of election of a member or members to serve in parliament for the said borough of New Shoreham shall be, and is hereby declared to be, in such freeholders as aforesaid, and in the persons who, by the custom and usage of the said borough, have, or shall hereafter have, a right to vote at such election; those whose names are mentioned herein,
and

and incapacitated and disabled by this act, only excepted: and the constable, or other proper officer for the time being, to whom the return of such writ or precept does belong, is hereby required to return the person or persons, to serve in parliament for the said borough, who shall have the major number of votes of such freeholders and other persons having a right to vote at such election (except such persons as are herein before excepted); any law or usage to the contrary notwithstanding."

The right of election being now extended by the above act to about twelve hundred freeholders of the rape of Bramber, the arts of corruption have been defeated, the borough has since been represented by independent country gentlemen, and every election has been conducted with constitutional decorum. The practical experiment that has been tried here and at Cricklade, of the advantages which would attend a parliamentary reform, or even a similar disfranchisement of the corrupt and decayed boroughs, is a complete refutation of every objection that has been urged against that important measure.

ANCIENT STATE.

New Shoreham, which took its rise from the decay of old Shoreham, at present a small village to the north-west of it, is remarkable for being the place where Ella the Saxon landed, with supplies from Germany, and drove the inhabitants into the great wood called Andrefledge, now the Weald. He had frequent skirmishes with the Britons; but having afterwards besieged and taken Andredchester, their chief fortress, he possessed himself of their country, and established a kingdom here.

New Shoreham is a borough by prescription, it having sent members to parliament ever since the year 1298, in the 26th year of the reign of Edward I. and is governed by two constables. It was formerly a more considerable place than it is at present, and had a priory of Carmelite or White friars, founded by Sir John Mowbray, knight, and also an hospital dedicated to St. James.

This borough sent anno 23 Edw. I.

RIGHT

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

11 Geo. III. c. 3, § 6. (*To be publicly read before they proceed to election*) Is in such freeholders, and in the persons who, by the custom and usage of the said borough, had a right to vote at such election (sixty-nine persons in this act particularly named, freeholders of the said borough, always and only excepted).

RETURNING OFFICERS.

The constables.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Twelve hundred.

BRAMBER.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS borough, which consists of six-and-thirty miserable thatched cottages, is composed of two interfections of a street, the upper and middle parts of which constitute the borough of Steyning. The Duke of Norfolk is lord of the manor in both places; and the constables, who are the
returning

returning officers in each borough, are chosen at his courts-leet; but the six-and-thirty cottages, which are burgage-holds, and give the right of voting to the tenants, are one half of them the property of the Duke of Rutland, and the other of Sir Henry Gough Calthorpe, bart. who, since the year 1786, have each agreed to send one member.

In 1786 there was a contest between the two proprietors of this borough; when a tenant of one of these miserable cottages had the fortitude and integrity to resist the offer of a thousand pounds to influence his apostasy; and we are happy to have it in our power to add, that this fact is authenticated by unimpeachable authority.

ANCIENT STATE.

Bramber, which is an ancient borough by prescription, is divided into two parts; the north part joining to the Steyning, which is half a mile from the south division, and called Brampton-street. From the year 1298 to 1472 it was joined with Steyning in the writs for electing
bur-

burgesses to serve in parliament; since which time they have elected as different boroughs. It is governed by a constable, annually chosen by a jury of the court-leet.

This borough first sent to parliament anno 23 Edw. I. though it afterwards intermitted sending; and sometimes sent in conjunction with Steyning, before 31 Hen. VI.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1703, 18 Jan. 10 Mar. 1715, 1 June. Is in the persons inhabiting houses, or in houses built on ancient foundations, paying scot and lot.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The constable.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Thirty-six.

PATRONS.

Duke of Rutland, and Sir Henry Gough Calthorpe, bart.

STEYNING.

STEYNING.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS borough, together with that of Bramber, consists of one street, not more than two thirds as large as Fetter-lane in London; but constituting *two boroughs*, with a right of sending *four members to parliament*!!! They formerly elected in conjunction, and intermitted till 31 Henry VI. One part of Bramber is in the centre of the borough of Steyning, and a part of Steyning intersects Bramber in like manner. Inveloped in the dark cloud of legal quibble and intricacy, they present us, like all the rotten boroughs, with a finished picture of political deformity; irregular in their districts, unintelligible in their constitutions, indefinite in their rights, corrupt in the exercise of their functions, contradictory in their respective organizations, and adverse to the ancient established principles of the constitution, and the rights of men.

The right of election has been the subject of litigation in this place for near a century, and has but just received a final decision from a committee constituted under the authority of 28 Geo. III.

to

to determine the same, upon an appeal from a contrary determination the preceding year.

In 1701 the right was determined to be in the inhabitants paying scot and lot, and not receiving alms ;

In 1710, to be in the constables and householders (inhabitants) paying scot and lot ;

In 1791, to be in the inhabitants of ancient houses, and houses built on the sites of ancient houses, within the borough of Steyning, being householders, paying scot and lot, and not receiving alms.

In 1792, the select committee appointed to try and determine the merits of the petition of James Martin Lloyd, esq. and others, resolved,

That no person have a right to vote at an election for members to serve in parliament for the borough of Steyning, in respect of any houses within the borough of Bramber, the tything of Bidlington, or the manors of Charlton or King's Barns.

The said select committee, at the same time, also determined,

That the right of election of members to serve in parliament for the borough of Steyning, in the county of Suffex, is in the constable and householders, inhabitants within the said borough, paying scot and lot, and not receiving alms.

The houses built on ancient foundations are all the property of Sir John Honeywood ; the rest belong to the Duke of Norfolk : and as those of a general description are more numerous, the resolution of 1792, repealing that of 1791, changes the patron, and gives that influence to the Duke of Norfolk, which the former gave to Sir John Honeywood.

The resolution of 1791 ousted Henry Howard, esq. the present member for Arundel, who had a majority of the householders paying scot and lot, and declared John Curtis, esq. who had only the votes of those persons who inhabited houses built on ancient foundations, duly elected.

The resolution of 1792 established the election of James Martin Lloyd, esq. who polled the
identical

identical votes which were deemed illegal the preceding year; and Mr. Whitbread, the petitioner, *lost* his seat by the same pretensions that Mr. Curtis had obtained one.

These contradictory resolutions have been productive of the same parliamentary inconsistency which distinguished the borough of Saltash in the last parliament. Mr. Ambler obtained his seat for that place by the decision of a committee in 1785, against the petition of Lord Strathaven, and the same Mr. Curtis, who has now succeeded at Steyning, on the right of the corporation to elect the members for that borough. In 1787, Mr. Lemon, the petitioner, by the determination of a second committee appointed to try the same question, succeeded on the votes of the burghage-holders, and ousted the Earl of Mornington, sitting member, who had been elected by the corporation.

“ Thus two members were sitting in the
 “ house of commons at the same time, and for
 “ the same borough, upon the right of different
 “ descriptions of electors, who had each of
 F 2 “ them

“them been deemed ineligible in the same parliament.”

This is exactly the case with the representatives of this borough. The inhabitants of houses built on ancient foundations, and the inhabitants in general, have each been declared to have the right of election ; and a member, chosen by each description of voters, has been seated and ousted in the present parliament.

ANCIENT STATE.

Steyning is an ancient borough by prescription ; of which little more can be said than that it was of some note in the time of the Saxons, when it had a church or monastery, in which St. Cudman was interred. It had also a priory of Benedictine Monks, subordinate to the Abbey of Trinity, at Fiscamp, in Normandy, founded by King Edward the Confessor, and dedicated to Mary Magdalen, which, at the dissolution of the alien priories, was given to the Abbey of Sion, in Middlesex.

The chief magistrate of this borough is a constable, who is annually chosen at the court-leet.

This

This place first sent to parliament 4 Edw. II. and after intermitted sending (as Bramber had done before) till 31 Hen. VI.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The constable.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About one hundred.

PATRONS.

Duke of Norfolk, and Sir John Honeywood.

EAST GRINSTEAD.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE right of voting formerly was allowed to be, by a resolution of the house of commons, in the inhabitants as well as burgage-holders; but by a subsequent one it is confined to the latter description of persons only. The burgage-holds here are in number thirty-six; twenty-nine of which are the property of the Duke of Dorset;

and the remaining seven belong to persons residing in the place. This minority is so inconsiderable, that no opposition can be made to the Duke's interest. If indeed the last resolution of the house of commons were rescinded, and the right of election left where it was, previous to that determination, an attempt to shake off the aristocratic yoke, might then be as successful as it would be commendable; but it would be, in the present state of things, both ridiculous and impolitic to attempt it.

ANCIENT STATE.

East Grinstead, which is so called to distinguish it from another town of the same name, about ten miles south-west of it, called West Grinstead, is thirty miles south of London, and a borough by prescription; having sent burgessees to parliament ever since the year 1307, the first year of the reign of King Edward II.

It is governed by a bailiff, chosen by the burgage-holders at the annual court of the Duke of Dorset, who is lord of the borough, and is returned by the steward of the court.

The

The county assizes are generally held here. John Sackville, earl of Dorset, in the reign of King James I. built an hospital here, and endowed it with 330*l.* a year, for the support of thirty-one poor persons of this town.

The first return of this borough is anno 1 Edward II.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1679, April 7. Being an ancient borough by prescription, the inhabitants, as well as the burgage-holders of the said borough, have a right to vote in elections.

1695, Feb. 9. Is not in the burgage-holders and inhabitants of the said borough.

Is in the burgage-holders only.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Thirty-six.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The bailiff.

PATRON.

Duke of Dorset.

F 4

ARUNDEL.

ARUNDEL.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS borough was under the influence of Sir George Colebrooke, in the days of his affluence; since which time its representation has been an object of contest, till 1784, when an agreement took place between the electors and the Duke of Norfolk, whose ancient and venerable castle is near the town, that each party should name one of its members. The corporation are in the interest of the Duke, who has likewise built a magnificent inn, and has a considerable property in this borough and its neighbourhood.

In 1780 a petition being presented to the house of commons by the Hon. Percy Charles Wyndham, complaining of the undue election and return of Sir Patrick Crauford, knt. and Thomas Fitzherbert, esq. a committee was appointed on the 6th of March, 1781, to try the merits of the same; when it appeared in evidence, that a society existed in this borough, under the name of the
Malt-house

Malt-house Club, fimilar, in its institution and practices, to the Christian Club at Shoreham ; and that the perfons who compofed this club had actually received thirty guineas a man for giving their votes at the preceding election. The evidence did not extend to the incapacitation of both the members. Mr. Fitzherbert was included in the allegations of the petition, but not in the decision of the committee, who reported to the houfe, on the 12th of March, 1781,

That Thomas Fitzherbert, efq. was duly elected.

That Sir Patrick Crauford, knt. was *not* duly elected.

That the Hon. Percy Charles Wyndham, the petitioner, was *not* duly elected.

A new writ was accordingly iffued, when Peter William Baker, efq. was unanimously chosen to fupply the vacancy.

The prefent members are, Henry Howard, efq. a relation to the Duke of Norfolk, and Sir George Thomas, bart. of Dale-Park, near this borough.

ANCIENT

ANCIENT STATE.

Arundel, which is so called from its situation in a dale or valley, on the bank of the river Arun, is pleasantly seated on the side of a hill, eight miles east of Chichester, and fifty-five south-west by south of London. The first account we have of this town is in King Alfred's will, in which he bestows it on Athelm, his brother's son. Some will have it to have been the Portus Arundi of the Romans; but this opinion does not appear to be countenanced by any good authority. It was famous in the time of the Saxons for its castle, which is said to have been a mile in compass, and was given by William the Conqueror to Roger de Montgomery his kinsman, who repaired it. One of his descendants forfeited it, by engaging in a rebellion against King Henry I. Adeline, that prince's consort, had it in dower; and her second husband, William de Albani, defended it against King Stephen, in favour of the Empress Maud, who, to recompence his services, created him Earl of Arundel, which title is, in limitation, different from others; that honour being so annexed, that whosoever is possessed of this castle and seignory is, without creation, Earl of Arundel. From the Albani, it descended by marriage to the Fitz-Alans; and from them, in the year 1579,
it

it went, with the heiress of that family, to Thomas Howard, duke of Norfolk.

In the civil wars this castle was thought to be of considerable importance, which occasioned a great contention between the king and parliament, who should be masters of it. It was first summoned by Lord Hopton, who obliged it to surrender in three days time; but Waller marching from London with considerable forces, beat up Lord Hopton's quarters by the way, and then marching to Arundel castle, soon retook it, and allowed the garrison quarter. It is still standing, though far from being perfect in every part; it is however in a good condition, and is one of the seats of the family of Howard, earls of Arundel and dukes of Norfolk.

In St. Nicholas's church at Arundel was a cell of four Black Canons, subject to the monastery of Seez in Normandy, supposed to have been founded by Roger de Montgomery, earl of Arundel, in the reign of William the Conqueror; but in the time of Richard II. it was abolished; and the church made collegiate. Upon the dissolution of this college, it was endowed with a revenue, which was then valued at 263l. 14s. 9d. a year

In

In the reign of Edward II. here was a house of Black Friars ; and in the reign of Richard II. an hospital was founded by Richard, Earl of Arundel, which was dedicated to the Trinity, and endowed at the suppression with the annual revenue of 89l. 5s. 2d.

Arundel is a borough by prescription, and has sent members to parliament ever since the twenty-third year of King Edward I.

CORPORATION.

It is governed, under a charter of Queen Elizabeth, by a mayor, and twelve burgesſes. The mayor is annually choſen, and is judge at a court-leet of the lord of the manor, held every three weeks. He has the authority of a juſtice of the peace, though he ſeldom executes the office ; he appoints collectors of the package and ſtallage, ale-conners, and fleſh-taſters ; and no writ can be executed within the borough without his permiſſion.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1693, Feb. 22. Is only in the inhabitants of the ſaid borough paying ſcot and lot.

NUMBER

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About one hundred and ninety.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

PATRON.

The Duke of Norfolk, partially.

WARWICK COUNTY.

THIS county, from the opulence and extent of its manufactories, is independent in a great degree of aristocratic controul; but it has been the last in the kingdom to emancipate itself from high church bigotry, and that spirit of persecution, which, in proportion to the increase of learning and science, is now becoming exploded in every part of Europe.

The late disgraceful riots in this county, and those of June 1780, is a humiliating proof to the people of this country that they do not take the lead in the extinction of prejudice, or in the advancement of literature, the inseparable companions of each other's progress.

The

The town of Birmingham, from its extent and population, has sufficient weight to return one of the county representatives, which the people of that place never fail to avail themselves of, notwithstanding the indifference that is affected to be shewn by some leading individuals, to the advantages they would derive from a perfect representation.

ANCIENT STATE.

This county, which received its name from Warwick, the county-town, is bounded on the north by Staffordshire and Leicestershire; on the east, by Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, and part of Oxfordshire; on the south, by the last-mentioned county and Gloucestershire; and on the west, by Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, and Staffordshire; extending in length thirty-three miles, twenty-six in breadth, and one hundred and twenty-two miles in circumference.

This is one of the five counties which, at the arrival of the Romans, were inhabited by the Cornavii. It contains many Roman antiquities, particularly two of their military ways, namely, Walting-street, and the Fosse-way. The former divides the north-east part of the county from Leicestershire, taking its course from the coast of Kent,

Kent, through London, and by Northamptonshire, to this county, from whence it extends to York, and the Picts wall. The Fosse-way enters the north-east side at High-crofs, and, running south by west, passes out at a place called Stretton, into Gloucestershire. Under the Saxon heptarchy it formed part of the kingdom of Mercia.

Warwickshire is divided into five hundreds, containing one city, and thirteen market-towns, viz. the city of Coventry, Atherston, Aulcester, Birmingham, Bitford, Colehill, Henley, Kington, Nuneaton, Rugby, Southam, Stratford, Sutton-Cosfield, and Warwick. It lies in the province of Canterbury, partly in the diocese of Litchfield and Coventry, and partly in that of Worcester; and has one hundred and fifty-eight parishes. It sends six members to parliament, namely, two knights of the shire for the county, two citizens for the city of Coventry, and two burgesses for the town of Warwick.

WARWICK TOWN.

THE right of election in this borough, according to the first resolution of the house of commons,

mons, was in the commonalty, which in the cases of Golchester, Boston, Bridport, and this place, has been explained to be housekeepers paying scot and lot; though, in the case of Pool, the same word was defined to be the select burgesses only. There have been frequent struggles here for superiority between the Earl of Warwick, of Warwick-castle, adjoining to this town, and the independent party. In 1780, and in 1784, the Hon. C. F. Greville, and Robert Ladbroke, esq. were returned to represent this town in parliament, in opposition to his Lordship's interest. At the last general election, however, in 1790, those gentlemen conceived that the Earl of Warwick's influence had increased to a great degree; in consequence of which they were induced to decline an opposition to it, which would have been attended with the certainty of much expence, and the uncertainty of being finally successful. Lord Arden, and Henry Gage, esq. now Lord Viscount Gage, both in the Earl's interest, were returned without a contest. Upon Mr. Gage's succeeding to his uncle's title, the Hon. Mr. Villiers was proposed by his Lordship's friends, and Mr. Knight, by the independent party. Mr. Villiers obtained a majority on the poll over Mr. Knight of nearly

two to one. The latter gentleman has petitioned parliament, in which he complains of the undue influence which had been used against him at the time of election, &c. but the merits of it have not as yet come on to be heard before a committee of the house.

ANCIENT STATE.

Warwick, which is nine miles to the south of Coventry, was called by the ancient Britons *Caer Guarvic*, and in the Saxon, *Warringwic*. Some derive its name from *Waremund*, the father of *Offa*, king of the *Mercians*, and others from *Guarth*, a British word, which signifies a fortress. It is the chief town in the county, from which *Warwickshire* takes its name, and is seated on a rocky ascent on the north side of the river *Avon*, at the distance of eighty-four miles north-west of London, where a way is cut to it through the rock, from each of the four cardinal points. Some have asserted that Warwick was built by *Kimbeline*, one of the British kings, cotemporary with our Saviour. It is said to have been almost destroyed by the *Picts* and *Scots*, and that it lay some time in ruins, till it was rebuilt by *Carac-tacus*, who erected a palace here. About this

time the Romans, under the conduct of Ostorius, extending their conquests in Britain, built several forts and garrisons on the river Avon, among which Camden supposes one was at this town, to which they gave the name of *Præsidium*. It was, however, again almost destroyed and laid waste, till it was repaired by Constantine, the father of Uter Pendragon; but he being slain by the Picts, in one of their incursions, the town was again ruined, and was at length restored by a British prince. After this it began to flourish; and Dubritius made it an episcopal see, appointing a church, dedicated to All Saints, to be his cathedral. When the Saxons came over, they ravaged the country as they went along, and caused the bishop to fly for safety into Wales. By the wars which followed, the town was again laid in ruins. Some time after, king Warramond, from whom the kings of Mercia descended, rebuilt the town, and called it Warra-wic, after his own name; after which it was again destroyed by the Danes, and repaired by the lady Ethelfleda, who, about the year 915, built a fortification for its defence, and called it the Dungeon.

The

The Norman conqueror, after his victory at Hastings, erected many strong castles for his own security, of which this was none of the meanest, and, when finished, committed it to the custody of Henry de Newbery, earl of Warwick. Towards the end of King Stephen's reign, Henry, duke of Normandy, arriving in England, the countess Gundred expelled the king's foldiers, and resigned this castle to the duke, who was soon after made king of England, by the name of Henry II. Guy de Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, and governor of this castle, dying in the ninth year of King Edward II. was succeeded by his son Thomas, who, in the reign of Edward III. rebuilt the outer wall of the castle, and erected several towers ; but that at the north-east corner, called Guy's tower, was erected by Thomas, earl of Warwick, in the seventeenth year of King Richard the Second's reign. At length George duke of Clarence was made governor of this castle ; at whose death, it being seized into the king's hands, it continued in the possession of the crown till the seventeenth year of Henry VII. when Edward Belknap, esquire, of the body to the king, was made constable. In the first year of Edward VI. John Dudley was advanced to the earldom of Warwick ; but upon his attainder,

in the first of Queen Mary, this castle escheated to the crown. Queen Elizabeth gave it to Sir Andrew Dudley, earl of Warwick; but, for want of heirs, it again reverted to the crown, and was bestowed by King James I. on Sir Fulke Greville in fee. It was at that time made use of as the county-gaol; but Sir Fulke, at the expence of 20,000*l.* rendered it a most beautiful structure. In the castle are shown the sword and accoutrements of the famous Guy, earl of Warwick, who is thought to have lived in the time of King Athelstan, and whose exploits are related with such romantic circumstances, that the whole are generally deemed fabulous.

On the 5th of September, 1694, the greatest part of the town was reduced to ashes, and the damages sustained were computed at about 100,000*l.* but it was soon rebuilt in a handsome manner, and is now a fine populous town.

When the Normans came over, it was only a borough, containing two hundred and sixty-one houses, of which one hundred and thirty-one belonged to the king, and one hundred and twelve to the barons.

This borough sent members *ab origine*.

COR-

CORPORATION.

This is a very ancient corporation, being made a mayor town by Queen Mary, in the year 1554, and re-incorporated by King Charles II. under whose charter it is at present governed by a mayor, a recorder, twelve aldermen or brethren, and twenty-four burgesſes or common-council-men.

The county aſſizes and general quarter-ſeſſions are held in this town.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1628, 3 May. Is in the commonalty of the ſaid town.

1722, 31 Jan. Is in ſuch perſons only as pay to church and poor in the ſaid borough.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About five hundred.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

PATRON.

The Earl of Warwick.

COVENTRY.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

* A SINGULAR case occurred at the election for this city in 1780. Mr. Roe Yeo and Mr. Holroyd were candidates in the interest of administration; and Sir Thomas Halifax and Thomas Rogers, esq. were supported by the corporation of Coventry, in opposition to those gentlemen. On the 9th day of September the election commenced, and the poll was opened and conducted in a peaceable and orderly manner for about the space of half an hour, when upwards of five hundred persons, who were not freemen or inhabitants of this city, tumultuously assembled together at the place of election, with a blue flag carried before them, and having blue and white cockades in their hats, the badges by which the party of Roe Yeo and Holroyd were distinguished, and there beat and ill treated all the electors who came to vote for Halifax and Rogers, and so impeded and obstructed the voters, that the sheriffs adjourned the poll to the Monday following, being the eleventh of the said month of September, and

continued

continued the same by divers adjournments, from day to day, to the 18th of the said month, in order that the said election might be made; but the poll was impeded, from time to time, by like tumults and assaults; and though the magistrates had appointed two hundred and thirty additional constables to preserve the peace, and to open a free access for the voters on both sides to come and poll, yet no more than eighty-three, out of two thousand, could give their votes: for which reason the sheriffs could not cause to be elected two citizens, according to the form and effect of the writ.

The sheriffs having certified the above to the house of commons, on the sixth day of November following, they were ordered to attend the house on the 23d of the same month.

A petition of Sir Thomas Halifax, and Thomas Rogers, esq. of similar import, was presented to the house on the 20th of the same month; which was ordered to be taken into consideration on the same day that the sheriffs were to attend; as was another petition of certain electors in the interest of Sir Thomas Halifax and Mr. Rogers.

A petition of Edward Roe Yeo, esq. and John Baker Holroyd, esq. was also presented on the same day, stating, that the sheriffs, who are chosen by the mayor and aldermen, and were the declared friends and partisans of their opponents, Sir Thomas Halifax, and Thomas Rogers, esq. had shewn the most flagrant partiality to those gentlemen, by constructing the poll-booth in such a manner as to allow a commodious access, through the mayor's parlour, to the voters in the interest of Halifax and Rogers, while the agents and friends of the petitioner were obliged to ascend by a ladder; and enumerating a variety of other charges, to shew the gross partiality and illegal conduct of the sheriffs.

This petition was also ordered to be taken into consideration with all the former. A new writ having been issued on the 21st Nov. following, petitions were again presented from Mr. Roe Yeo, and Mr. Holroyd, complaining, that in the interval of time between the general election and the 29th day of November, when a second election was had in pursuance of the above writ, a great number of freemen were illegally admitted to the freedom of the said city, who had no right
to

to such freedom, and without paying the usual fees on admission, on condition of their undertaking to vote, at the said election, for Sir Thomas Halifax, and Thomas Rogers, esq. and that a great number of persons duly intitled to be admitted to the freedom of the said city, demanded in the usual manner to be so admitted, being ready to produce the evidence of their titles, and to pay the usual fees, but were refused to be admitted, because they were believed to be in the interest of the petitioners; and that, at the said last election, after the poll had lasted near three weeks, almost all the legal freemen having then voted, and when it was known that there would be a large majority of votes in favour of the petitioners, a great number of persons were, on Monday the 18th, and Wednesday the 20th of December last, in a fraudulent and clandestine manner, admitted to the freedom of the said city, although the said persons had no title to such freedom, and were known, by the members of the corporation, who composed the council-chambers at which they were admitted, to have no title, and without paying the accustomed fees, or any fees, on condition of their voting for the said Sir Thomas Halifax, and Thomas Rogers, esq.

The

The above petition also contained the usual allegations of the returning officers, admitting these freemen to poll, who were not duly qualified, and rejecting others who were so qualified; and of the said candidates, Sir Thomas Halifax, and Thomas Rogers, esq. having, by themselves, or agents, been guilty of bribery, &c.

A similar petition was presented from several of the freemen in the interest of Mr. Roe Yeo and Mr. Holroyd, which were both ordered to be taken into consideration on Thursday the 15th day of February, 1781.

On the 31st of January, 1781, Thomas Noxon and Thomas Butler, late sheriffs of Coventry, were brought to the bar of the house of commons, and had leave to be heard by counsel in their justification.

A petition of Edward Roe Yeo, esq. and John Baker Holroyd (now Lord Sheffield, of the kingdom of Ireland), and also of several freemen of the city of Coventry, on behalf of themselves and others, complaining of the conduct of the said sheriffs, being read to the said Thomas Noxon,

Noxon and Thomas Butler, leave was given them to be heard by counsel against the charges in the said petition, and the counsel for the petitioners ordered to proceed in support of the allegations of their petition.

Orders were made for sixty-nine witnesses to attend in support of the charges against the sheriffs; and the matter had a full investigation, after various adjournments, on the 15th of March, 1781; when the order of the day being read for the attendance of Mr. Thomas Noxon and Mr. Thomas Butler, late sheriffs of the city of Coventry, and for taking into further consideration the several petitions presented to this house upon the 20th day of November last, relating to the return made by the said sheriffs at the last general election;

The said sheriffs, and the counsel for Lord Sheffield and Mr. Roe Yeo, and for the several freemen of the city of Coventry, who have petitioned this house, complaining of the conduct of the said sheriffs, were called in;

And the sheriffs acquainted the house, That the counsel they had applied to had not time to prepare himself to undertake their defence.

Then

Then one of the counsel for Lord Sheffield and Mr. Roe Yeo, and for the several freemen of the city of Coventry, who have petitioned this house, complaining of the conduct of the said sheriffs, summed up their evidence :

And the sheriffs being asked by Mr. Speaker, what they had to say in justification of their not having made any return of members to serve in parliament, at the last general election ; and in answer to the matters charged against them in the petitions of Lord Sheffield and Mr. Roe Yeo, and of the several freemen of the city of Coventry, who have petitioned this house, complaining of their conduct ;

The said sheriffs were heard ; and, having desired that their under-sheriff, who attended as their agent, might examine the witnesses who had been ordered to attend this house on their behalf ;

The said agent was called in ; and, at the bar, examined the several witnesses who were attending, in justification of the conduct of the sheriffs.

And the said agent, having submitted to the house, That the said sheriffs had still several other
wit-

witneſſes, but that they were now at Coventry, and that they therefore deſired further time, in in order to have an opportunity to ſummon the ſaid witneſſes ;

The ſaid ſheriffs and their agent, and the ſaid counſel, were directed to withdraw.

And a motion being made, and the queſtion being put, “ That the further attendance of the
“ ſaid ſheriffs, and the further conſideration of
“ the ſeveral petitions relative to the return made
“ by them for the city of Coventry, at the laſt
“ general election, be adjourned till this day
“ ſe’nnight ;”

It paſſed in the negative.

Then the ſaid ſheriffs and their agent, and the ſaid counſel, were again called in ;

And the ſheriffs having acquainted the houſe, that they had not any other witneſſes to produce,

The ſaid ſheriffs and their agent, and the ſaid counſel, were again directed to withdraw.

Resolved,

Resolved, " That it appears to this house, that
" at the last general election of citizens to
" serve in parliament for the city of Co-
" ventry, Thomas Noxon and Thomas But-
" ler, the sheriffs, who were the returning
" officers at the said election, were not pre-
" vented, by riots or otherwise, from making
" a return of members to serve in parliament
" for the said city :"

Resolved, nem. con. " That the said Thomas
" Noxon and Thomas Butler, late sheriffs of
" the said city of Coventry, not having made
" any return of members to serve in parlia-
" ment, at the late general election, for the
" said city, are thereby guilty of a high vio-
" lation of the law, and a gross breach of
" the privileges of this house."

A motion was made, and the question being
proposed, " That the said Thomas Noxon and
" Thomas Butler be, for their said offence, com-
" mitted to his majesty's gaol of Newgate, and
" that Mr. Speaker do issue his warrants accord-
" ingly ;"

An

An amendment was proposed to be made to the question, by leaving out the words, " his majesty's gaol of Newgate," and inserting the words, " the custody of the serjeant at arms attending this house," instead thereof.

And the question being put, that the words " his majesty's gaol of Newgate," stand part of the question;

It was resolved in the affirmative.

Then the main question being put;

Ordered, " That the said Thomas Noxon and
" Thomas Butler, be, for their said offence,
" committed to his majesty's gaol of New-
" gate; and that Mr. Speaker do issue his
" warrants accordingly."

On the 26th day of March the said sheriffs presented a petition to the house, setting forth that they had been found guilty of a high violation of the law, and a gross breach of the privileges of the house, for not having made any return of members to serve in parliament at the last
general

general election for the city of Coventry; and that they were thoroughly sensible of the great offence they had been guilty of, and humbly begged pardon of the house for the same.

They were accordingly ordered to be brought up to the bar the next day, when they were reprimanded by the speaker, and discharged.

A committee was appointed, on the 15th of February, to try the merits of the petition of Mr. Roe Yeo and Lord Sheffield, against the return of Sir Thomas Halifax, and Thomas Rogers, esq. who reported, on the 27th of the said month, that the petitioners were duly elected.

Mr. Elwes, the chairman of the committee, also reported, " That it appeared, that much
" partiality and fraud was used in the admission of
" persons to the freedom of the city of Coventry,
" during the last election in that city. The com-
" mittee are of opinion, that it would be ex-
" pedient, in order to prevent the like fraudulent
" practice for the future, that a bill should be
" brought in for that purpose."

A bill

A bill was accordingly brought in, on the 12th of March, for better regulating elections of citizens to sit in parliament for the city of Coventry; which was passed into a law on the 14th of May, and received the royal assent on the 5th of July following.

This city is not under immediate influence, and might be perfectly independent in the choice of its members, if the present destructive mode of treating was abolished.

It is worthy of remark, that the case of Hindon affords us the only instance, in the present reign, of a prosecution being ordered by the house of commons against any candidate for bribery; and that the Coventry case is the only one which occurs, in the same period of time, of a returning officer being punished for partiality. In both cases the parties were in opposition to government.

ANCIENT STATE.

Coventry is, in some writings, called Coventria, from a rich convent which formerly stood there; but others are of opinion, that it was derived from Cuertford, the name of a rivulet now called

the Sherburn, which runs through the city. It is situated ninety miles north-west of London, has enjoyed many privileges and immunities from several of our kings, and is, jointly with the city of Litchfield, the see of a bishop. Edward the Third granted this city a mayor and two bailiffs; and Henry the Sixth, who annexed several villages and hamlets to it, granted, that the city, with nineteen villages, should be an incorporated county, distinct from the county of Warwick; and that the bailiffs of the city should be sheriffs of the county; but Edward the Fourth was so offended at the attachment the citizens had shewn to Henry the Sixth, that he took the sword from the mayor, and disfranchised the city. The citizens however redeemed their charter by the payment of five hundred marks; four years after which, that prince was so perfectly reconciled, that he kept St. George's feast at Coventry, and stood godfather to the mayor's child.

This city holds pleas for all actions; has a gaol for felons as well as debtors, and sends two members to parliament.

Coventry, which gives the title of earl to the family of the same name, is remarkable for a fair;

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on the first day of which is a procession, in honour of Lady Godiva, and is founded on the following tradition :—Leofric, earl of Mercia, and first lord of Coventry, who died in the thirteenth year of the reign of Edward the Confessor, being offended at the citizens, loaded them with heavy taxes ; on which Godiva, his lady, a woman of most exemplary virtue and piety, incessantly solicited him to ease their burdens. At length, tired with her importunities, he told her he would take off the duties, provided she would ride naked, in open day-light, through the most frequented parts of the city ; flattering himself that her modesty would prevent her complying with the condition. The lady, sensibly touched by the distress of the city, resolved to relieve it, even on the terms proposed. She therefore issued orders to the citizens, that all their doors and windows should be shut, and that nobody should attempt to look out, on pain of death ; and then rode naked through the streets on horseback ; but her hair, hanging loose about her, was so long, that it covered her down to her legs. It is added, that while she was riding in this manner through the streets, none dared to look at her, except a taylor, who, as a punishment for his violating the injunction of the noble

lady, which had been published with so pious and benevolent a design, was struck blind. This taylor is now known by the name of Peeping Tom; and the window through which he is said to have gratified his curiosity, is still shewn, with his effigy in it; which is always new dressed on the anniversary of the procession.

In the reign of Henry the Fourth; a parliament was held at Coventry; when, in the writs directed to the sheriff, it was ordered, that no person should be elected who was skilled in the law; on which account this was called the unlearned parliament.

This city had many religious houses and hospitals. Here was a famous convent of nuns in the time of the Saxons, under the government of St. Osburg, which was destroyed by the Danes in 1016. In the room of this convent was erected a noble priory, which, according to Speed, was founded by King Canute; but Dugdale informs us, that the Earl of Mercia and his lady were the founders. It had at first an abbot and twenty-four Benedictine monks, and was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, St. Peter, and St. Osburg.

To

To this priory the earl gave twenty-four lordships, with all the liberties and privileges which he himself had enjoyed in them; and the charter was confirmed by King Edward the Confessor. Upon the vacancy of an abbot, in 1095, Robert de Limesey, bishop of Chester, obtained the custody of the abby, and leave to remove his episcopal seat thither. The monks, however, held their places, though they were very uneasy under his government; and were at length expelled, and canons put in their room; but Pope Innocent turned them out, and replaced the monks, who obtained several letters of protection from the kings and popes, with new additions to their former revenues. The priors had a seat in parliament; and the monastery continued in a flourishing condition till the dissolution of religious houses, when its revenues were valued at 732l. a year.

In this city was an ancient college or hospital, consisting of a master or warden, and several brothers and sisters, founded in the beginning of the reign of Henry the Second, chiefly at the expence of Edmund, archdeacon of Coventry; also an hospital, founded in the reign of Henry.

the Second, and dedicated to St. Mary Magdalen, by Sir Hugh Kvelioke; besides which, there was a house of Grey friars before the year 1234. These friars used to exhibit pageants on Corpus Christi day, and performed what were called Coventry sports; which brought a great concourse of people to the city. This house having no endowment, the monks subsisted entirely upon alms. It stood till the general dissolution, when the house was granted to the mayor, bailiffs, and commonalty of the city; and though the church is demolished, the steeple is still standing. A house of Carmelite friars was also founded here, in 1342, by Sir John Poultney, knt. who had been four times lord-mayor of London; which, at the dissolution, had a revenue of 7l. 13s. 8d. per annum.

This city, which was made a mayor-town by Edward III. and a county of itself by Henry VI. having returned to the four first parliaments of Edward I. intermitted sending members, except 8 Edw. II. and 20, 25, Edw. III. till 31 Hen. VI.

CORPORATION.

By charter of James I. it is governed by a mayor, recorder, two sheriffs, ten aldermen, thirty-

thirty-one superior, and twenty-five inferior common-councilmen.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1701, February 24. The freemen of Coventry receiving alms or charity, have no right to vote.

1708, March 1. Is in such persons who have served apprenticeships for seven years within the city, to one and the same trade, not receiving alms or constant charities.

Persons receiving Sir Thomas White's gift, are thereby disabled from giving their votes.

It passed in the negative.

1708, March 3. Persons receiving Mr. Wheatley's gift not disabled.

1711, March 13. The members of the Fullers company have a right to vote, being freemen, and not receiving alms or weekly charity; and all such freemen as do not receive alms, and have served seven years apprenticeship in the city or suburbs, who do not receive alms or weekly charity.

1722, November 20. In such freemen as have served seven years apprenticeship to one and the same trade, in the same city or the suburbs thereof, and do not receive alms or weekly charity; such freemen being duly sworn and enrolled.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Two thousand four hundred.

RETURNING OFFICERS.

The sheriffs.

WESTMORELAND.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS small county is as much under the command of an individual, as the most rotten borough in the kingdom. The great estates which the Earl of Lonsdale possesses, are sufficient to procure a passive obedience to the dictatorial authority of his lordship. The most spirited efforts of the few independent freeholders
in

in support of their rights, would here be inefficient; nor can any opposition to the above nobleman's nomination of members to represent it in parliament, be productive even of a probability of success.

ANCIENT STATE.

This county takes its name from the nature of the soil, which is generally a moor or barren heath; and, from its situation with respect to another tract of mountains, is sometimes called the English Appennine. It is bounded on the north, by Cumberland; north-east, by the bishopric of Durham; east, by Yorkshire; south, by Lancashire; and on the west, by part of Lancashire and Cumberland; extending about sixty miles in length, forty in breadth, and about one hundred and fifty in circumference.

Westmoreland is one of the counties which, in the time of the Romans, was inhabited by a tribe of ancient Britons, called the Brigantes, and contains the traces of two Roman military ways, upon one of which several relics of very remote antiquity have been discovered.

In

In the time of the Saxons, this county was subject to the kings of the Northumbers, in which early times the mountains in the southern part were of great use, in restraining the inroads of the the Scots and Picts; and the inhabitants, being hardened and inured to war by their constant alarms, and frequent skirmishes with their northern enemies, were considered as a kind of foldiers.

In the reign of William I. this county seems to have been overlooked, either on account of its apparent barrenness, or its remoteness from the capital; for the lands were not disposed of till the reign of King John, who, to reward the great services of Robert de Vipont, who had been with him at the battle of Mirabel, where he gained a complete victory over the French, granted him the castles of Battle and Brough, together with the whole bailiwick of Westmoreland.

This county consists of two divisions; the barony of Westmoreland, sometimes called the Bottom, and the barony of Kendal. The barony of Westmoreland, which includes the north part of the county, is an open, champaign country, twenty miles long and fourteen broad, consisting of arable
and

and pasture land. The barony of Kendal, which is so called from the town of that name, comprehends the south part of that county, and is very mountainous: it has, however, fruitful vallies; and even many of the mountains yield pasture for sheep and cattle, while others are not only barren, but seem formed of rocks, thrown together by the hand of discord, and frightful deserts, laid waste by the piercing storms of the north.

With respect to the civil and ecclesiastical divisions, each of them are divided into two wards, and each ward into constablewicks, the number of which does not appear. It is remarkable, that it was never divided, either into hundreds, wapentakes, or rapes, like other counties; the reason of which is supposed to be, because the inhabitants paid no subsidies, they having been thought sufficiently charged, in being obliged to defend that part of the kingdom against the Scots. It is seated in the province of York: that part which is called the barony of Westmoreland, is comprehended in the diocese of Carlisle; and the other part, called the barony of Kendal, in the diocese of Chester; both baronies containing thirty-two large parishes. It has no city, and only contains
eight

eight market-towns, viz. Ambleside, Appleby, Brough, Burton, Kendal, Kirkby-Lonsdale, Kirkby-Steven, and Orton. It sends only four members to parliament, two knights of the shire for the county, and two burgesses for the borough of Appleby.

APPLEBY.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

The right of voting in this borough, although there is no special resolution of the house of commons concerning it, is admitted to be in burgage tenure. These burgage-holds are now the property of the Earl of Lonsdale and the Earl of Thanet. Hog-sties have been deemed freeholds here, and purchased by the Thanet and Lonsdale families, at a price exceeding all belief. The contention between these two families has given the borough its only consequence ; but they have now agreed, that each shall send one member. The election of this place, therefore, sit down quietly, to be represented by a hog or a horse, as its noble proprietors shall think most proper.

ANCIENT

ANCIENT STATE.

Appleby, which is pleasantly situated on the north bank of the river Eden, by which it is almost surrounded, is a place of great antiquity, and supposed, by Horsley, to be the Roman town, called Galacum; though that station has, since Camden's time, been generally placed at Kirby-Thure: but that Appleby was the Galacum of the Romans, appears from its situation, being more agreeable to the distance mentioned in the Itinerary. Some suppose it to have been Abalaba, one of the stations by the line of the Val-lum, mentioned in the *Notitia*: but Horsley has plainly proved, that this station was nearer the wall; and, as for the station at Kirby-Thure, he has shown it to be the Brovonacæ of the Romans. In more modern times here was a house of White friars, said to be founded by Lord Vesey, Lord Percy, and the Lord Clifford, in the year 1281.

Appleby, which is the county town, is supposed formerly to have had sheriffs of its own, and to have been a county of itself. King Henry I. gave it privileges equal to those of the city of
York,

York, which were confirmed by Henry II. Henry III. and other succeeding kings. It is now, however, greatly gone to decay, consisting only of one broad street ; at one end of which is a castle, fortified by the river, and by large trenches, where the river does not surround it. This castle was given by king John to John de Vipont, or de Veteriponte, as a reward for his good services. It remained in this family till the reign of King Henry III. when, Robert de Vipont, joining, in a rebellion with Montfort, earl of Leicester, was slain in the battle of Evesham ; and his estate being seized, was given to Roger Clifford, and Roger de Leybourne, who had married his daughters. Upon the division of the Vipont's estate, this barony fell to the Cliffords, afterwards earls of Cumberland, the ancestors by the mother's side of the earls of Thanet, in whose family it still remains. Part of it is at present used as a common jail for malefactors.

Appleby suffered greatly in the wars between England and Scotland. In the reigns of Henry II. and Richard II. it was burnt to the ground ; and

1598 it was depopulated by the plague; from which desolations it never fully recovered.

This borough, which was then a mayor-town, sent members anno 23 Edw. I.

CORPORATION.

It is governed by a mayor, recorder, twelve aldermen, two bailiffs, and sixteen capital burgesses.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

Is in the burgage holders.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Nominally, in about one hundred burgage tenures, which are now the property of two individuals.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

PATRONS.

The Earl of Thanet and the Earl of Lonsdale.

WILTSHIRE.

WILTSHIRE.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS county possesses all that spirit of independence for which the neighbouring county of Somerset is so remarkably eminent. The freeholders and yeomen are as independent in their minds as in their fortunes; and a combination of those, who call themselves the great men of the county, to deprive them of their constitutional privileges of electing their own representatives, will only tend to expose the inability and arbitrary principles of the one party, and the manly exertions and ability of the other, when exercised in supporting their rights. About twenty years ago, Mr. Herbert, now Lord Portchester, was proposed as one of the candidates to represent this county in parliament; in which he was supported by the whole aristocracy in it. The independent freeholders could not help feeling an honourable resentment at such an arbitrary measure, the intention of which was to render their suffrages of no effect; they therefore

therefore immediately opposed to that candidate Ambrose Goddard, esq. one of their own body; and, after a poll of several days, victory was declared for them in his favour. They have also shewn themselves zealous in the support of a parliamentary reform. In 1780 committees were established in several counties for the purpose of obtaining this desirable object; and some of the greatest characters for integrity and ability were engaged in it; among whom were the Earl of Abingdon, the Right Hon. Charles James Fox, and the Marquis of Lansdown, then Earl of Shelburne; who, being prevented by illness from attending a meeting of the county, convened at the Devizes on the 29th day of March in that year, delivered his sentiments upon the subject in the following letter:

March 26, 1780.

“ SIR,

“ I am very much mortified, that it is not in my power to perform a duty I feel so very agreeable and honourable, as that of attending the committee of correspondence and association at Devizes, on Tuesday next, and the meeting of

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the county, which is to be held the subsequent day.

“ The early negative put upon the enquiry into the public expenditure in the house of lords ; the refusal of any account of places and pensions held by members of that house ; the violence done to the constitution by the arbitrary removal of the Earl of Pembroke from the lord-lieutenancy of our county (an office which his ancestors have so long and so honourably held, I believe, from its first institution) for no other possible cause, but for having voted as a free man upon a public question ; as well as by that of the Marquis of Caermarthen from the lord-lieutenancy of the east riding of Yorkshire.

“ And in the house of commons, the proceeding to lay new burdens, without taking *any*, much less *effectual* economical measures, in direct opposition to the prayer of our petition, as well as those of other counties ; the number of taxes proposed to be superadded, some bearing very hard upon our county in particular, namely, that which regards the private brewery ; besides the addition made to the severest of all duties,
that

that on salt ; when it is certain that triple the sum might have been, and may still be produced from the suppression of unnecessary offices, savings in the mode of expenditure, and other economical reforms, which require only integrity to accomplish ; the difficulties which have been thrown in the way of a very able plan of reform now before the house ; no inquiry made into exorbitant contracts ; accomptants suffered to remain with large balances at their own disposal ; the measure for a commission of accounts taken out of independent and disinterested hands, and assumed by the authors of our distresses, in such a manner, as to mock every idea of parliamentary independence, or popular inquiry ; no expectation offered by the minister, except a possible reverfionary reduction of those places which do not contribute to the influence of the crown, in answer to the petitions desiring an abolition of those that do ; and, withal, a position laid down as fundamental, by the supporters of the court and ministers in both houses, that the influence of the crown is not dangerous to the constitution, and is not increased, in contradiction to the evidence of all our senses.

“ These facts, I apprehend, can leave little doubt with any freeholder, who approved of the former meeting, of the necessity of immediately associating for the accomplishment of those indispensable objects, stated in our petition, in as strong terms as constitutional language can dictate.

“ But I am sensible that it must occur to our country, as it has already done to others, to consider what steps can be taken to obtain that reform, of which our present parliament gives so little hope, acting even under all its present circumstances ; or what security can be had for preserving in future what we may have the good fortune to obtain in this moment of exigence. It gives me great satisfaction to find, that it has occurred to none to have recourse to other means than those purely civil, as well as strictly constitutional. Though no one feels with more concern the abuses which have taken place in the militia, and particularly the departure from the ancient, true, fundamental, and, till of late years, invariable militia principles, of keeping them within their counties, except in case of actual invasion (their present distant and unnecessary removals

removals serving only to assimilate them to the standing army, in principle and in habits, not in discipline), I still have that confidence in our army as well as militia, as at present constituted, that I hope neither are yet so estranged from a love of the constitution, as to give any just apprehension of danger.

“ Two measures have offered themselves for consideration, which, inasmuch as they affect the house of commons, merely, come unquestionably within the province of our county meeting, and cannot by any misrepresentation be construed to arise from improper motives: the one is, to shorten the duration of parliaments; the other, to equalize the representation, which, at present, confessedly bears no proportion, either to the number of people, the quantum of property, or the proportion of public contribution; nor does it hold to any rank or description whatever; but is the mere child of accident or intrigue.

“ The people of England, I conceive, have, and always had, a clear, unalienable, and inalienable right, both to the one and the other, in their fullest extent, upon a stronger ground than

that of any act or acts of parliament. That "the house of commons must be free in every circumstance of its constitution," is the foundation-stone of our government. The same right which the people had formerly, and, through the blessing of God, exerted so happily for us, their posterity, to have parliaments frequently *bolden*, when they were aggrieved by the crown's withholding them, now goes to have them *frequently* and *equally chosen*, when it appears, through the length of the duration, and the inequality of the representation, that they are still more aggrieved than they were formerly, by the total want of them; and, if this should appear to be the sense of a fair majority of the people, collected together, either in county-meetings, or in any other constitutional mode, there can be no doubt, but that proper laws will be immediately enacted to restore the constitution to its first principles in these particulars: for it is not to be presumed, that the present defective representation would venture to oppose the manifest sense of those from whom they derive all their authority; much less that the house of lords, constituted as it is, or the crown, could be so ill-advised, as to deny their concurrence and assent to so salutary a reform,

in

a part of the constitution which more particularly belongs to the democracy.—These principles are so unalterably engraven in my mind, that I should hold myself criminal in the suppression of them, when called for. It will be for the county to judge, whether they will proceed to declaratory resolutions on the subject of them, and then wait till the sense of the rest of the kingdom is so far known; or whether they will be contented finally, without pushing the right of the people to its utmost extent, by insisting on an annual election, and a total change of the representation. There are men, of whose integrity there is but one voice, and whose judgment deserves every attention throughout England, who foresee more inconvenience than I confess I do in the *whole* extent of these propositions. Besides, the consequences of great changes have been, in all times, so uncertain, that it may be most prudent to avoid them; especially as, in the present instance, I am free to own, that, so far as I am capable of judging, every end may be obtained by the repeal of the septennial act, and a reasonable addition of county members, chosen by districts, or under some regulation, which might preclude all unnecessary expence.

But I shall most willingly subscribe to the discretion and wisdom of the meeting, in this and every other consideration of expediency; and I dare rely upon the generosity and candour of the county and committee, that they will put a just interpretation upon the liberty I take, meaning to assume no more than what might become any other freeholder; submitting my unreserved sentiments, in time of distress, to their better judgment, as I cannot have the honour of attending in person, when I might explain myself more particularly upon each part, as occasion might require. I have nothing so much at heart as to prove the sincerity and consistency of my conduct upon all occasions, but most of all in the county of my residence, and among a neighbourhood whose good opinion must in the end make the comfort and honour of my life.

“ I have the honour to be, with great respect and consideration,

“ S I R,

“ Your most obedient

“ And humble servant,

“ SHELBURNE.”

*To JOHN AUDRY, Esq.
Chairman of the Wiltshire Committee.*

ANCIENT

ANCIENT STATE.

This county, which, in the time of the Saxon heptarchy, constituted a part of the kingdom of Wessex, derived its name from Wilton, formerly the principal town: it is included in the western circuit, being in the province of Canterbury, and diocese of Salisbury. It is bounded on the north and north-west by Gloucestershire; north-east, by Berkshire; east and south-east, by Hampshire; south, by Dorsetshire; and on the west, by Somersetshire; extending fifty-four miles in length, thirty-eight in breadth, and upwards of one hundred and forty-two in circumference.

In the time of the Romans it was, according to Camden, inhabited by the Belgæ and Cangi. It is called, by ancient writers, Severnia, and Provincia Severorum, from Severia, one of the ancient names of Old Sarum. There were formerly in this county three Roman ways; the two first of which were called, by the Normans, the Chemini Majores of the Romans, because they traversed the island from sea to sea.

A ditch, called Wansdyke, is a famous boundary, crossing the county from west to east, which
divides

divides the southern from the northern part. It is generally thought to be a corruption or contraction of the Saxon name Wodenefdic; Woden's ditch, Woden being a Saxon deity, supposed to be the same with Mercury; but the common people have entertained a ridiculous opinion, that this ditch was cut by the devil on a Wednesday. Antiquarians make it a boundary between the West Saxons and Mercians; but others say, it was cut long before the Mercian kingdom was settled; which opinion is supported by William de Malmfbury, who says, that in the year 590 the Saxons were routed by the Britons at Woden's dyke. Dr. Stukeley supposes it to be older than the Roman settlement here; because, as the last-mentioned gentleman observes, where the Roman road runs across Wiltshire, the rampart of this ditch is levelled, in order to make a passage for it.

This county, which consists of two parts, north and south, is divided into twenty-nine hundreds, containing three hundred and four parishes, the city of Salisbury, and twenty-three market-towns. It sends thirty-four members to parliament, viz. two knights of the shire, two citizens for Salisbury, and two burgesses for each
of

of the following places; Chippenham, Calne, Cricklade, Devizes, Heytesbury, Hindon, Downton, Great Bedwin, Marlborough, Malmesbury, Ludgershall, Westbury, Wilton, Wotton Bassett, and Old Sarum.

The most remarkable part of South Wiltshire is that extensive place called Salisbury Plain; and that noble and ancient monument of antiquity, called Stonehenge. It also contains a great number of Roman, Saxon, British, and Danish encampments.

SALISBURY.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

IT is equal in population to Winchester; but, like that city, Bath, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Andover, Poole, Tiverton, Banbury, and many other large towns, has no share in electing the democratic branch of the legislature, but what is exercised by its corporation, consisting of a mayor, twenty-three aldermen, and thirty common-council. This exclusion from constitutional rights

rights, places the inhabitants of these towns, in common with all the unrepresented part of the kingdom, in a situation not to be envied by the subjects of any other nation. If freedom consists in electing our own legislators, and in delegating to them the authority by which we are to be governed, those persons who are not allowed the exercise of this privilege, taste as little of the sweets of liberty, as where the will of mankind is subject to an absolute monarch, or an unlimited aristocracy.

The Earl of Radnor, who is recorder of this city, has the principal interest with the corporation, who usually elect one of his lordship's relations for their representative.

ANCIENT STATE.

Salisbury, or New Sarum, which derives its name, as well as origin, from Old Sarum, was by the ancient Romans called *Sorbiodunum*; and the Saxons, *Searysbrig*. It is situated in a valley, watered by the Upper Avon, at the distance of eighty-three miles from London.

This city is famous for the antiquity and grandeur of its cathedral, which was finished in the
year

year 1258, at an expence of upwards of 26,000*l.* and is reckoned one of the most regular and elegant gothic structures in the kingdom. It is built in the form of a cross, and the spire, which is considered as the highest in England, rises four hundred and ten feet from the ground. The inclosure of this cathedral is encompassed with the houses of the canons and the prebendaries, which, being generally of free-stone, make the best appearance of any in the city. It maintains a bishop, dean, precentor, chancellor, three archdeacons, a subdean, subchanter, forty-five prebendaries, six vicars or petty canons, six singing men, eight choristers, an organist, and other officers. The revenues of the bishopric were valued, at the suppression, at 1507*l.* 14*s.* 6*d.* and those of the chapter at 721*l.* 18*s.* 1*d.* Besides which, there are three other churches, dedicated to St. Martin, St. Thomas, and St. Edmund.

In the times of popery there were several other religious foundations; particularly the church of St. Edmund, which was, before the year 1270, made collegiate for a provost and twelve secular canons, by Walter de Willey, bishop of Salisbury. The revenue of this college was valued, at the dissolution

tion, at 102l. 5s. 10d. per annum. A college founded by Egidi de Bridport, bishop of Salisbury, and dedicated to St. Nicholas, which, near the time of the suppression, consisted of a warden, four fellows, and two chaplains; a priory for Dominicans, or Black friars, founded by Edward I; a college dedicated to St. Edith; a priory of Franciscans, or Grey friars; and an hospital near the city, founded by Richard Poor, bishop of Salisbury, in the year 1382, which at the dissolution had a revenue valued at 25l. a year.

This city sent members anno 23 Edw. I.

CORPORATION.

It was first incorporated by King Henry III. and afterwards by Queen Anne, and consists of a mayor, recorder, twenty-three aldermen, and thirty common-councilmen.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1689, April 1. Is in the mayor and corporation.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Fifty-four.

PATRON.

Earl of Radnor, partially.

WILTON

WILTON.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS borough, on account of its vicinity to the seat of the Earl of Pembroke, is entirely under his lordship's influence. The right of election is in the corporation, consisting of a mayor, recorder, five aldermen, three capital burgesſes, and eleven common-councilmen. Theſe are all in the intereſt of his lordſhip ; an oppoſition to which would be attended only with expence ; ſo that his nomination of the members to repreſent it in parliament is final and commanding.

ANCIENT STATE.

Wilton, which is a very ancient town, appears to have been called Ellandunum, but afterwards took the name of Wilton, from its being ſeated on the bank of the river Willey. Here Egbert, king of the Weſt-Saxons, fought a battle with Beorwolf, King of the Mercians, in the year 821, when Egbert, gaining the victory, was never after moleſted by the Mercians. Here alſo King Alfred, in the year 871, fought the Danes ; and though in the beginning he had the advantage, in the

the end he was driven out of the field. The loss of the Danes, however, was so great, that they petitioned for a truce, and promised to depart the kingdom. During the government of the rest of the Saxon kings, this town was very populous and extremely flourishing.

Wulston, earl or duke of Wiltshire, built a small monastery here, and repaired an ancient church, dedicated to St. Mary, together with a chantry, in which he placed a college of priests, about the year 1773; but in the year 800, Alburga, his widow, converted this college into a nunnery. In 871, King Alfred, having built a new nunnery here, removed hither the nuns of St. Mary, who were twenty-six in number. This new nunnery, which was of the Benedictine order, was at first dedicated to St. Mary and St. Bartholomew, but afterwards to St. Edith; and at the dissolution was endowed, according to Dugdale, with 60*l.* 1*s.* 1*d.* and, according to Speed, with about 65*l.* per annum. Here was also a house of Black friars.

The county courts are usually held here, and the knights of the shire chosen.

This borough sent members anno 23 Edward I. and has continued to do so, notwithstanding its decay on the increase of Salisbury.

CORPORATION.

By charter of Henry VIII. it consists of a mayor, recorder, five aldermen, three capital burgesses, and eleven common-councilmen.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1702, November 28. The election of any person to be a burgess of Wilton, who has not taken the sacrament of the Lord's supper, according to the rites of the church of England, within one year before such election, is a void election.

1710, March 17. Agreed to be in the mayor and burgesses, who are to do all corporate acts, and receive the sacrament.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Twenty-four.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

PATRON.

Earl of Pembroke.

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DOWNTON.

DOWNTON.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE right of election in this borough is in the burgage-holders. The tenures which give this privilege, are all the property of the families of the Earl of Radnor, or of Robert Shaftoe, esq. between whom an opposition has subsisted for many years.

This contest has caused a petition to parliament at every election since the passing of the Grenville act.

The first was tried in 1775, in which Sir Philip Hales, and John Cooper, esq. were petitioners on the Shaftoe interest, against Thomas Duncombe, esq. and Thomas Dummer, esq. sitting members on the Radnor interest; in which the Shaftoe interest was successful.

The second was tried in February 1780, on the petition of Robert Shaftoe, esq. on his own interest, against the Hon. Bartholomew Bouverie, on that of his brother, the Earl of Radnor; in which Mr. Shaftoe was successful.

The

The third was tried in March 1781, in which John Saunders, esq. and Alexander Hume, esq. were petitioners, and Robert Shaftoe, esq. and the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway, esq. were fitting members ; when the Shaftoe interest was again successful.

The fourth was tried in June and July 1784, when there was a double return ; Mr. Shaftoe, and the Hon. H. S. Conway, upon the Shaftoe interest ; and the Hon. Edward Bouverie, and the present Sir William Scott, on the Radnor interest ; when Mr. Shaftoe was declared duly elected, and the election void with respect to a second member.

The fifth petition was in consequence of the above vacancy, when a double return again took place : the Hon. E. Bouverie, in the Radnor interest, and the Hon. H. S. Conway, in the Shaftoe interest ; when the Shaftoe party was again successful.

The sixth petition was at the last general election, in 1790, which was tried the ensuing year, when Mr. Shaftoe and his colleague petitioned against the return of the Hon. Bartholomew Bou-

verie, and Sir William Scott, who had been returned on the Radnor interest; when that interest for the second time became successful.

The number of legal votes in this borough do not appear to be above twenty. Sir Philip Hales, and Mr. Cooper, in 1775, were declared duly elected with eleven, and ten votes; but they are sometimes split into four times that number.

The right is admitted to be in persons having a freehold interest in burgage-tenements, holden by a certain rent, fealty, and suit of court of the Bishop of Winchester, who is lord of the borough, and paying reliefs on descent, and fines on alienation.

The points at issue upon these several petitions were, splitting, and occasionality; and whether the returning officer was the deputy of the Bishop of Winchester's bailiff, or the deputy of the steward of the lessee of the manor; the said manor and borough having been leased out for lives from the reign of Elizabeth.

The

The late Anthony Duncombe, Lord Feversham, was proprietor of the greater part of the burgages in Downton; to some of which he was entitled under a settlement of Sir Charles Duncombe; the rest he had purchased. Upon his death in 1763 with male issue, the settled estate descended to the late Mr. Duncombe; the remainder of his estates in Downton, he by will directed to be sold for the benefit of his two daughters, giving the refusal of them to the Duncombe family, in order to prevent disputes. The present Earl of Radnor married one of the daughters, and Mr. Bowater the other. Mr. Duncombe also left a daughter, married to Mr. Shaftoe, to whom he bequeathed his Downton estate. The trusts of Lord Feversham's will not having been carried into execution, the manner in which his trustees exerted the influence of his property, occasioned a new scheme of election in Downton, after the dissolution of the parliament in 1780; for, in the former elections, the opposition to Mr. Duncombe's family had not been maintained by the estate of Lord Feversham, or by any other family interest, but by the legal objections before mentioned; but, in the elections of 1784 and 1790, Mr. Shaftoe, having the strength of Mr. Dun-

K 3

combe's

combe's property, was opposed by that of Lord Feversham's, which his trustees employed for that purpose.

The Bishop of Winchester's bailiff deputy, and Sir Philip Hales, the lessee of the manors, stewards deputy, each taking upon them to act as returning officer,

The former admitted upon his poll,

For Shaftoe,	—	50
Conway,	—	49
Bouverie,	—	38
Scott,	—	37

The latter, upon his poll, made the numbers,

For Bouverie,	—	44
Scott,	—	43
Shaftoe,	—	2
Conway,	—	1

The committee determined, that the deputy steward of the lessee was the legal returning officer.

To

To follow this intricate investigation of the right of twenty thatched cottages to return two members to parliament, would be a waste of our time, and our readers' patience; nor would the three volumes, to which we have limited our work, admit a report of all the six cases. Should not a reform of this system of representation render this reporting business premature, we shall soon see the cases of boroughs without houses, and representatives without constituents, exceed the voluminous bulk of the statutes at large.

ANCIENT STATE.

Downton, or Dunkton, which is situated on the east side of the Avon, is an ancient borough by prescription.

This borough having returned to parliament from 23 Edw. I. to 38 Edw. III. ceased sending, except 1 Hen. V. till 20 Henry VI.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1775, Feb. 4. Was considered, by the counsel on both sides, in their arguments, to be in persons having a freehold interest in burgage tenements, holden, by a certain rent, fealty, and suit of court,

of the Bishop of Winchester, who is lord of the borough, and paying reliefs on descent, and fines on alienation.

1 Dougl. El. 235. There is no determination on the right of election.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About twenty; sometimes split into eighty.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The deputy steward of the lessee of the manor.

PATRONS.

Earl of Radnor, and Robert Shaftoe, esq.

HINDON.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE right of election in this borough is in the bailiff and inhabitants paying scot and lot; the number

number of which is two hundred and ten. Shaftesbury, Arundel, Stockbridge, and this place, have exhibited the most flagrant acts of bribery and corruption, before committees of the house of commons, nearly similar in their circumstances, and equally injurious, in their consequences, to those which we have reported of Shoreham and Cricklade; though the two last are the only places to which an effectual remedy has been applied, by carrying the right of suffrage to such an extent of district, as shall increase the number of voters to a limit that the purse of an individual cannot seduce.

The case of Hindon is the only one in the present reign, in which the house of commons have directed a prosecution against the sitting members, or petitioners; and in this instance it appears to have been attended with singular hardship, as the promises made to the electors, on behalf of the sitting members, were, by an imprudent and unpardonable officiousness of their agents, without either the authority or knowledge of their principals; and the petitioners upon their trial were acquitted.

The petition was heard before a committee of the house of commons, in the month of February,

1775.

1775. The sitting members were T. B. Hollis, esq. and General Smith; the petitioners, Richard Beckford, esq. and James Calthorpe, esq. Reciprocal charges of bribery were made by each party, and substantially proved against the agents of both; whereupon the committee determined,

That Richard Smith, esq. is not duly elected a burges to serve in this present parliament for the borough of Hindon, in the county of Wilts;

That Thomas Brand Hollis, esq. is not duly elected a burges to serve in this present parliament for the said borough of Hindon;

That James Calthorpe, esq. one of the petitioners, is not duly elected a burges to serve in this present parliament for the said borough of Hindon;

That Richard Beckford, esq. one of the petitioners, is not duly elected a burges to serve in this present parliament for the said borough of Hindon;

That the last election to serve in this present parliament for the said borough was a void election.

At

At the same time Mr. Dundas acquainted the house, that in the course of the examination into the merits of the petition of James Calthorpe, esq. and Richard Beckford, esq. it having appeared to the committee, that the most flagrant and notorious acts of bribery and corruption had been practised; and that a very considerable majority of the electors of the borough of Hindon had been bribed and corrupted in a very gross and extraordinary manner; and that several others of the said electors had been concerned as agents for that purpose; the committee, desirous that the house might adopt such measures as may discourage, and if possible put an end to a practice so subversive of the freedom of elections, had directed him to lay before the house the whole of the evidence given before the said committee, with their opinions thereupon. And he read the report in his place, and afterwards delivered it in at the table, where the same was read; and the resolutions of the committee are as follow:

Resolved, " That it appears to this committee,
" That Richard Smith, esq. by his agents,
" has been guilty of notorious bribery, in
" endeavouring to procure himself to be
" elected

“ elected and returned a burghers to serve in
“ this present parliament for the borough of
“ Hindon, in the county of Wilts.”

The like resolution respecting Mr. Hollis.

Resolved, “ That it appears to this committee,
“ That James Calthorpe, esq. by his agents,
“ has been guilty of notorious bribery, in
“ endeavouring to procure himself to be
“ elected and returned a burghers, to serve in
“ this present parliament for the said bo-
“ rough of Hindon.”

Resolved, “ That it appears to this committee,
“ That Richard Beckford, esq. has, by his
“ agent, endeavoured, by promise of money,
“ to procure himself to be elected and
“ returned a burghers, to serve in this present
“ parliament, for the said borough of Hin-
“ don.”

Resolved, “ That it appears to this committee,
“ That the Reverend John Nairn, of Hin-
“ don; Fasham Nairn, esq. late of Berry’s-
“ street, St. James’s; Francis Ward, of
“ Sher-

“ Sherborne-lane, London ; Stevens, a but-
 “ cher, at Salisbury, commonly called Job-
 “ ber Stevens, &c. &c. (in all, thirteen,
 “ specified by name) have acted as agents,
 “ and have been accessory to, and concerned
 “ in, notorious acts of bribery and corrup-
 “ tion, that have been practised at the
 “ last election for the said borough of Hin-
 “ don.”

Resolved, “ That it is the opinion of this com-
 “ mittee, that the house be moved for leave
 “ to bring in a bill, to disfranchise the said
 “ borough of Hindon, in the county of
 “ Wilts.”

The consideration of this report was adjourned
 till the 23d of February ; and in the mean
 time, an order was made, that the speaker should
 not issue his warrant for a new writ, till the house
 proceeded to such consideration.

On that day, it was *Ordered*, “ That leave be
 “ given to bring in a bill, to incapacitate,
 “ from voting at elections of members of
 “ parliament, one hundred and ninety per-
 “ sons

“ fons by name (including feveral of thofe
“ mentioned in the fifth refolutions of the
“ committee), out of two hundred and ten
“ who had polled at the election; and for
“ the preventing bribery and corruption in
“ the election of members to ferve in par-
“ liament for Hindon.”

Mr. Dundas, Mr. Byng, Mr. Elwes, and the other members of the committee, were ordered to prepare and bring in this bill; and in the mean time, it was *Resolved*, “ That the Speaker
“ fhould not iffue his warrant to make out a new
“ writ for a month longer.”

On the 8th of March Mr. Dundas prefented the bill, which was read, and ordered to be read a fecond time on the 29th of that month. It was of courfe alfo ordered to be printed; and a printed copy of the bill, with the order for the fecond reading, was ordered to be ferved on all the perfons named in it; and it was *Resolved*,
“ That leaving them at their refpective abodes
“ fhould be good fervice.”

The day following (the 29th of March) the order of the day being read, and the queftion
being

being proposed, for reading the bill a second time, the messenger, who had been charged with the service of the copies of it on the parties, was called to prove such service; and Thomas Spencer, one of the persons named in the bill, was, at his own desire, heard on behalf of himself, against the bill: then, in consequence of a motion for that purpose, the entry on the journals of the house, of the 22d of March, 1722-23, and the 4th of April, 1723, of the proceedings of the house upon the bill for inflicting certain pains and penalties upon Francis, Lord Bishop of Rochester, was read; after which, the bill was read a second time; and it was *Resolved*, "That it
" should be considered in a committee of the
" whole house, on the 5th of April, and that the
" petitioners against it should be heard before that
" committee, by themselves or their counsel."

" That it be an instruction to the said committee of the whole house, that they have
" power to receive a clause, or clauses, for inflicting a suitable punishment on the said Richard Smith, esq. for his said offence,"

" It passed in the negative."

And

And the second resolution being read, and a similar question put, respecting Mr. Hollis, that likewise passed in the negative; which being done, the house resolved itself into a committee of the whole house, on the bill.

In this committee, it being proposed to call certain persons, named in the bill, and incapacitated by it, to prove the allegations it contained (for it had been debated and settled in the house, in some former stage of the business, that the evidence before the select committee, and reported by them, could not be admitted upon this occasion), it was objected, that they, being parties, and like defendants in an indictment, could not, without overturning the known rules of law and justice, be received as witnesses in this case. This objection produced a debate; and though it was treated as of no weight, by some gentlemen of the long robe, it was strenuously supported by others, and proved fatal to the bill; for all the persons who were capable of proving the facts, and who had proved them before the select committee, were themselves offenders, and named in the bill.

When

When the speaker resumed the chair, on a motion of Mr. Dundas, leave was given to bring in a new bill, similar to the former, but leaving out the names of certain persons, who were intended to be made use of as witnesses; and Mr. Solicitor-general, Sir George Hay, Mr. Grenville, and Lord George Germaine, together with the members of the select committee, were ordered to prepare and bring it in.

On Wednesday, the 12th of April, Mr. Dundas presented this new bill; which being received, and read the first time, the house was moved, that the four first resolutions of the select committee should be read; and this being accordingly done, the 20th day of April was appointed for the second reading. A similar order to what had been made on the former occasion, was now made, relative to the serving of the parties with copies; and orders were made severally, that Francis Mead, Thomas Spencer, John Becket (*baker*), John Becket, son of William, John Baldwin, William Crabb, Thomas Penry, Thomas Richardson, and Thomas More, persons named in the former, but omitted in this bill,

should attend the house, at the time appointed for the second reading.

The order of the day being now read, the bill was ordered to be read a second time, and the counsel against it (Mr. Pepys, for the petitioners incapacitated by the bill ; Mr. Bearcroft for the other petitioners, electors of Hindon ; and Mr. Macdonald, for the Rev. Mr. Nairn) being called in, the bill was read a second time, and the petition of Thomas Howell and others was read, and counsel heard.

The bill was then committed to a committee of the whole house for the ensuing day ; and the several petitions were referred to that committee, and the witnesses ordered to attend.

On Thursday the 27th of April, the petition of Thomas Howell and others, praying to be admitted witnesses, was referred to the committee of the whole house : and Mr. Elwes, chairman of that committee, reporting, that Thomas Howell, on being examined in relation to the non-attendance of Thomas Spencer and John Becket, two of the witnesses who had been summoned, had
grossly

grossly prevaricated, he was ordered to be committed to Newgate; and afterwards, Mr. Elwes reporting, that William Lucas, being examined before the committee, had grossly prevaricated, and given false evidence, he was ordered to be committed to the Gate-House.

A similar report, and the like order, were made, concerning Henry Chant; and Mr. Elwes reporting, that Spencer and Becket had attended the day before, in pursuance of the order of the house, but had purposely kept out of the way, to avoid being served with the order for their attendance this day, they were ordered to be sent for in custody of the serjeant at arms; and an order being made for the house to resolve itself again, on the Tuesday following, into a committee of the whole house, for the future consideration of the bill, the orders for the attendance of the witnesses were renewed.

On Monday the 1st of May, Thomas Howell was ordered to be removed from Newgate to the Gate-House, having petitioned the house for that purpose.

On Tuesday the 2d of May, the serjeant at arms being called upon to give an account of what had been done, in relation to the taking Thomas Spencer, and John Becket, the messengers who were sent in search of them informed the house, that very strict inquiry had been made after them, but that they were not as yet taken : upon which the committee of the whole house, for the consideration of the bill, was put off till the Monday following ; the orders for the witnesses were renewed ; and it being suspected, from the testimony given by the persons who had been committed, that Mr. Smith and Mr. Fasham Nairn had been concerned in secreting Spencer and Becket, they were ordered to attend on the Monday.

On Monday the 8th of May, petitions were presented from Howell and Lucas, acknowledging their prevarications, which they said were unintentional; but alledging they had declared all they knew concerning Spencer and Becket, and desiring, on account of their poverty, and their having families to maintain, that they might be admitted to ask pardon at the bar of the house,
and

and be discharged without the payment of fees;

These petitions were ordered to lie on the table.

The like information as on the Tuesday preceding, was given by the messengers who had been sent in search of them, concerning Spencer and Becket.

Mr. Smith and Captain Fasham Nairn were then examined, in relation to the non-attendance of Spencer and Becket; after which, the order of the day, for the committee of the whole house on this business being read, it was *Resolved*, "That
" it appeared to the house, that from the absence of Spencer and Becket, two material witnesses in support of the bill, it would not be
" expedient to proceed in it in this session of parliament."

It was then severally resolved, that the house would take the report of the select committee who were appointed to try the petition of James

Calthorpe, and Richard Beckford, esq. into further consideration, as early as possible the next session; that until then no warrant for a new writ should be ordered; and that an humble address should be presented to the king, to issue a proclamation for apprehending Spencer and Becket, with the promise of a reward, so that they might be delivered into the custody of the serjeant at arms during this session of parliament; and this address was ordered to be presented by such members of the house as were members of the privy-council.

Then, upon motion for that purpose, the first resolution of the select committee, as agreed to by the house on the 23d of February, was read; and then, upon a motion for that purpose, the following entry in the votes of the house, of the 5th of December last, was read,

Resolved, " That if it shall appear that any person hath procured himself to be elected
 " or returned a member of this house, or
 " endeavoured so to be, by bribery, or any
 " other corrupt practices, this house will
 " pro-

“ proceed with the utmost severity against
“ such person.”

And an order made,

“ That the attorney-general do forthwith pro-
“ secute Richard Smith, esq. for the said offence.”

The second resolution was read in like manner,
and the like order made, that the attorney-general
should prosecute Mr. Hollis.

The third resolution being also read, a motion
made, and the question proposed, that the at-
torney-general should prosecute James Calthorpe,
esq. the previous question was put, and resolved
in the affirmative; and then the like order was
made for the prosecution of Mr. Calthorpe.

Lastly, the fourth resolution being read, it was
ordered that the attorney-general should likewise
forthwith prosecute Mr. Beckford.

The address for apprehending of Spencer and
Becket was presented to the king, and the pro-
clamation issued; but on the Thursday the 11th
of May, they surrendered themselves; and, it being

severally resolved by the house, " That they had
" purposely absconded, in order to avoid being
" served with an order for their attendance, as
" witnesses, on a committee of the house," they
were ordered to be committed to Newgate.

On the 8th of May, 1775, the house resolved to
take the whole matter into their most serious con-
sideration as early as possible in the next session of
parliament, and that, in the mean time, no war-
rant should be ordered for a new writ.

On the 31st of January, 1776, an order was
made, that leave should be given to bring in a bill
for the same purposes with the two which had
been brought in during the former session.

Monday the 5th of February, the bill was
brought in, and the second reading was fixed for
the 19th.

Various petitions were presented by interested
parties against the bill, who were heard by coun-
sel ; and after innumerable debates and adjourn-
ments, the house came to the following resolu-
tion.

Resolved, " That this house will, upon this day
" three months, resolve itself into a com-
" mittee of the whole house, to consider
" further of the bill to incapacitate certain
" persons therein mentioned, from voting
" at elections of members to serve in parlia-
" ment for the borough of Hindon, in the
" county of Wilts."

The reader will perceive, that by this resolution the bill was virtually thrown out; it was known that the session would be at an end, long before the day appointed for taking it again into consideration; and all bills depending at the end of a session fall, of course, to the ground. If the house had intended to take up the affair in the succeeding session, they would have come to a like resolution with that of the 8th of May, 1775; but in truth there was no such design,

Mr. Douglas observes, that there would be great difficulty in fixing on the new class of voters, because the influence of different gentlemen of property in the neighbourhood of the place would have been more or less increased, or diminished,
according

according as the freeholders of one, two, or more hundreds should have been admitted to a participation of the right of election. There was some danger therefore, that a law which in its origin was intended to be a public benefit, and to amend the constitution, might, in the end, turn out a mere job, and become subservient to the particular interest of certain individuals; in short, many who had at first promoted and supported the bill, began in the course of the session to alter their opinion with regard to it, or lost at least much of the zeal which they had formerly shewn for its success. On the different occasions when it was to be taken into consideration, there was often other business more urgent, and more generally interesting, to be discussed; and by the time that was finished, and the order of the day for the house to resolve itself into a committee on the Hindon bill called for, the greater number of members, already worn out by long attendance, were glad to leave the house: advantage was taken of this by some gentlemen, who, from the beginning, made no scruple of avowing their resolution of employing every means and every stratagem which the forms of procedure in the house of commons should furnish, or authorise, in

order to defeat the bill. Forty members are necessary to constitute a house ; and if it appear that there is not that number present, an immediate adjournment must take place. Whenever those gentlemen imagined the number present was under forty, they moved that the house should be counted ; and in this manner the proceedings were, at several times, suddenly stopped ; viz. on Thursday the 7th of March, on Wednesday the 27th of that month, and on Tuesday the 7th of May. Another art was practised, with equal, or even greater success : every possible objection to the admissibility of evidence was either raised by some member of the house, or taken by the counsel who attended at the bar, on the part of the persons who had petitioned against the bill ; almost every such objection produced an argument, a debate, a question, and a division. Thus the progress of the business was clogged and retarded so very effectually, as to make even those who continued the most anxious promoters of it, despair of ever bringing it to a conclusion ; inasmuch, that at length, by a sort of tacit agreement of all parties, the whole was dropped on the 8th of May, 1776, and a new writ ordered to be issued for the electing of two burgesses to serve
in

in parliament for the borough of Hindon; by which means the fate of Shoreham and Cricklade was avoided.

This borough is now considered as under the influence of William Beckford, esq. of Fonthill; but we have not yet learned that it is become more immaculate, from the ordeal it has passed.

ANCIENT STATE.

Hindon, which is a general thoroughfare in the road from London to the south parts of Somersetshire, is an ancient borough by prescription, governed by a bailiff and burgesſes.

The first return of this borough was anno 27 Henry VI. There was a precept issued to it anno 6 Richard II. but no answer was made thereto.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1701, April 3. Is in the bailiff, burgesſes, and such inhabitants only as pay scot and lot.

1701, May 13. Is in the inhabitants of the said borough not receiving alms.

Agreed to by the house.

1728,

1728, April 12. Is in the inhabitants of houses within the said borough, being housekeepers and parishioners, not receiving alms.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Two hundred and ten.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The bailiff.

PATRON.

William Beckford, esq.

HEYTESBURY.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS place, as well as Westbury, which are both but small villages, have a right to send members to parliament; while Warminster, which is one of the largest towns in the county, has no such privilege; but, from their contiguity to it, being four miles distant, it derives only the unpleasant

pleasant reflexion, that advantages of such a superior tendency should be affixed to so much insignificance.

The right of election here is in the burghage-holds, which are about fifty in number, and are the property of the Duke of Marlborough, and W. P. Ashe A'Court, esq. each of whom returns a member. This town was entirely burned down in the year 1766; since which time it has been rebuilt to its former extent.

ANCIENT STATE.

Heitfbury, Heightsbury, or Heytsbury, commonly called Haresbury, is an ancient borough by prescription, governed by a bailiff and burgessees. Walter Lord Hungerford built an hospital, or alms-house, for twelve poor men and one woman; as also a house for a schoolmaster, who was to be a priest, and not only teach grammar, but to oversee the poor men. Margaret, his widow, obtained a licence from Henry IV. to perfect this charity, and settle a chaplain in it, to celebrate divine service every day in the parish-church, for the souls of herself, her husband, and
others.

others. It has also a collegiate church, with four prebendaries, and a free school.

This borough never sent to parliament till 27 or 28 Henry VI.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

In the burgage-holders.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Fifty.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The lord's bailiff.

PATRONS.

Duke of Marlborough, and P. W. A. A'Court, esq.

WESTBURY.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE right of election in this borough is of a particular nature, being in every tenant of any burgage-

burgage tenement in fee, for lives, or ninety-nine years, determinable on lives, or by copy of court-roll, paying a burgage-rent of fourpence or twopence yearly, being resident within the said borough, and not receiving alms. There are three kinds of burgage-holds ; viz. freehold, copyhold, and leasehold. In some places the proprietor of the burgage-hold only has a right to vote ; in others, it is in the tenant or occupier of such a tenure ; so that the same perplexities and doubts which arise, as to the right of voting, in scot-and-lot or corporation boroughs, happen also in places of this description.

These burgage tenures, which are twenty-four in number, are the property of the Earl of Abingdon.

ANCIENT STATE.

Westbury, which is supposed to have received its name from being situated in the western part of the county, is supposed to have risen from the ruins of an old Roman city, called Verlucio, about half a mile to the north : but whether it was that city or not, it was certainly known to the Romans, by great quantity of Roman coins which
: have

have been found here. It is twenty-four miles north-west of Salisbury, and ninety-five west of London, and is said to have had formerly as great privileges as the city of Bristol.

The first return for this borough was anno 27 Henry VI. who is said to have incorporated it.

CORPORATION

Consists of a mayor, recorder, and twelve burgesses.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1702, Dec. 1. The tenants of burgage-houses, by lease, for years absolute, have a right to vote.

1715, June 1. Is in every tenant of any burgage-tenement in fee, for lives, or ninety-nine years, determinable on lives, or by copy of court-roll, paying a burgage-rent of fourpence or twopence yearly, being resident within the said borough, and not receiving alms.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Twenty-four.

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M

RETURNING

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

PATRON.

Earl of Abingdon.

CALNE.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS borough has had the honour of giving seats in parliament to John Dunning, esq. the late Lord Ashburton, and to Colonel Barré. The right of election is in twenty-four ancient burgesses, who annually elect, out of their own body, two guild stewards to be the returning officers at elections of their members of parliament.

The influence which formerly prevailed here, was that of Richard Bull, esq. and Mr. Duckett; but the Marquis of Lansdown, from his popularity, and occasional residence at Bow Wood Park, in this neighbourhood, has had, for more than
twenty

twenty years, the sole command and absolute controul over it.

ANCIENT STATE.

Calne, which is a small but ancient town, was formerly endowed with various privileges, and is supposed to have risen out of the ruins of an old Roman colony, on the other side of the river Calne, near Studley, where Roman coins are frequently found. Here was one of the palaces of the West Saxon kings, and probably had a castle, one of the streets being called Castle-street, and a common field adjoining, called Castle-field, though there are no traces remaining. There was also an hospital of Black canons, dedicated to St. John, in the reign of Henry III. governed by a master, warden, or prior, and valued, at the dissolution, at 2l. 2s. 8d. a year.

A remarkable accident happened here in the year 977: a great synod or convocation being held, at which the king, nobility, and bishops were present, to decide a contest between the regular and secular priests, relating to the celibacy of the clergy, and to the monks holding benefices, which was considered by the seculars

as an encroachment upon their rights; as a Scotch bishop, in the course of the debate, was pleading with great warmth for the seculars, all the timbers of the assembly-room suddenly gave way, and the whole structure fell to the ground; by which accident most of the secular priests were killed, and buried under the ruins; some of the other priests were also killed, and many wounded; but the seat of the Archbishop Dunstan, who was the chief advocate for the monks, and the president of the synod, remaining firm, and he being unhurt, his preservation was interpreted as a miraculous declaration of Heaven in their favour: upon which, the secular priests, in Dunstan's province, were turned out, and monks placed in their room.

This is an ancient borough by prescription; and having sent to all the parliaments in the reign of King Edward I. ceased sending, except anno 1 Edw. II. and 34, 36, Edw. III. till 2 Rich. II.

CORPORATION

Consists of twenty-four capital burgeses; out of which two constables are annually chosen.

RIGHT

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1710, Dec. 22. Is in the inhabitants of the borough, having a right of common, and being sworn at Ogbourn-court.

1723, Feb. 25. Is in the ancient burgeses of the said borough only,

That the right of returning burgeses is in the guild stewards.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Twenty-four.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The constables.

PATRON.

Marquis of Lansdown.

DEVIZES.**POLITICAL CHARACTER.**

THE right of election in this borough is exclusively in the corporation, consisting of a mayor,

M 3

aldermen,

aldermen, and common council. The influence which prevails here, is that of James Sutton, esq. of New Park, in this county, brother-in-law to the speaker of the house of commons, who was once member for this borough.

This town, which is of a very considerable magnitude, labours under the same disadvantage with Salisbury and Marlborough, respecting the right of voting being limited to the body corporate, and not extending to the people at large.

The same exclusion existing likewise in the cities of Bath and Winchester, the town and county of Poole, and in the large towns of Portsmouth, Plymouth, Andover, Tiverton, Banbury, Wycombe, Dartmouth, Scarborough, Thetford, St. Edmund's Bury, Newport in the Isle of Wight, Bewdley, and Harwich, our observations on those respective places will apply to the chartered monopoly of this borough.

ANCIENT STATE.

Devizes, which probably derives its name from the Latin word *divisa*, signifying division, and supposed to have been conferred upon this town,
from

from its being anciently divided between the king and the bishop of Salisbury, is a town of great antiquity, supposed, by Dr. Stukeley, to have been the Punctuobice of Ravennus. The Romans inclosed it with a vallum and ditch; in the last of which the inhabitants have made a road almost round the town; but in several places both the ditch and the vallum are still visible, and took in the castle, which was originally a Roman work, erected in a fine situation, where it was fortified by nature. In after-times it was made almost impregnable, by Roger, bishop of Salisbury, though it is now nearly destroyed.

Many Roman coins of different emperors have been found in the neighbourhood of the Devizes, together with pots and other earthen vessels, supposed to be Roman. Just without the town, in a pleasant plain called the Green, a large urn full of Roman coins was discovered in the year 1714; and near the same place were found buried, under the ruins of an ancient building, inclosed with Roman brick, several brass statues of heathen deities, supposed to have been deposited there about the year 234, when the Roman troops were called out of Britain. These were carried about

the kingdom as a show, and consisted of a Jupiter Ammon, about four inches long, weighing somewhat above four ounces : Neptune with his trident, the prongs of which were much shorter than they are usually represented ; this figure was about four inches in length, and weighed four ounces : a Bacchus, much of the same weight and dimensions : a Vulcan, somewhat less than any of the above figures : a Venus, about six inches in length, with the left arm broken off, but much the best finished of any in the collection : a Pallas, with her helmet, shield, and spear, between three and four inches in length : a Hercules, about four inches long, weighing six ounces and a half. Besides these, there were a Mercury, the wolf with Romulus and Remus, a vestal virgin, some Egyptian deities, and a coin of the emperor Alexander Severus.

This town, which sent to all the parliaments of King Edward I. made only four returns, viz. 1, 8, 9, and 19 Edw. II. till 4 Edw. III.

CORPORATION.

By charter of King Charles I. it consists of a mayor, recorder, ten magistrates, and twenty-four

four common-councilmen, who have liberty of making what burgesſes they pleaſe, all of whom have votes in election of members to parliament.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1688, Mar. 21. Is in the mayor and ſelect number of burgesſes only.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Thirty.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

PATRON.

James Sutton, eſq.

CHIPPENHAM.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE corporation of this borough conſiſts of a bailiff and eleven burgesſes, who, in the year 1624, on the 9th of April, contended, that the excluſive privilege of voting for members of parliament

liament was vested in them; but the house of commons then *Resolved*, "That the burgesſes and freemen, more than twelve, have voices in the election."

In the year 1741, on the 28th of January, they ſet up a ſimilar claim, when the following propoſition was put to the houſe; That the words "burgeſſes and freemen," mean only ſuch burgeſſes and freemen as are inhabitant houſeholders of the ancient houſes, called free or burgage-houſes, within the ſaid borough; which paſſed in the negative. The right is now underſtood to extend to the freemen of the borough, as well as to the twelve capital burgeſſes, whoſe number is about one hundred and fifty.

The patronage is equally divided between Sir Edward Baynton, bart. Sir Samuel Fludyer, bart. and Henry Dawkins, eſq. An union of intereſts between two of theſe gentlemen, renders void, and effectually excludes, the influence of the third. A coalition at preſent exiſts between Sir Samuel Fludyer and Mr. Dawkins.

ANCIENT STATE.

Chippenham, one of the chief towns of the West Saxons, by whom it was called Gyppanham, signifying a market-place, was one of the palaces of the West Saxon kings, which Alfred bequeathed to his youngest daughter Elfleda, wife of Baldwin, earl of Flanders. It is seated on the lower Avon, over which it has a handsome bridge of sixteen arches, ninety-four miles west of London. It is a large, populous, and well-built town, with a magnificent church, said to have been erected by the family of the Hungerfords, though some allow it to have only been beautified by them. It has, however, a chapel, still called Hungerford's chapel. Walter, Lord Hungerford, obtained a licence from King Henry VI. for founding a chantry in this church, or elsewhere in the parish, to pray for the good estate and souls of his sons, as also for those of Henry V. and Catharine his wife, as well as those of all the faithful deceased.

This town having, after the reign of Edward I. sent only to two parliaments of Edward II. and four of Edward III. intermitted sending till

- 2 Richard II. and again ceased sending after the twelfth of his reign, till 1 Henry VI. It is an ancient borough by prescription.

CORPORATION.

By charter of Queen Mary it is governed by a bailiff and twelve burgessees.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1624, April 9. The burgessees and freemen, more than twelve, have voices in the election.

1741, Jan. 28. "That the words "burgessees and freemen" mean only such burgessees and freemen as are inhabitants, householders of the ancient houses called free or burgage houses within the said borough."

It passed in the negative.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About one hundred and fifty.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The bailiff.

PATRONS.

Sir Samuel Fludyer, bart. and Henry Dawkins, esq.

MALMES-

MALMESBURY.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE right of election in this borough, is, by the resolution of the 13th of December, 1702, vested in *thirteen* individuals, an alderman and twelve burgesses, who are all the dependants of Dr. Wilkins, a physician of this town. This gentleman holds the lucrative place of receiver-general for the county; from which circumstance it may be inferred, that the representatives for this place are seldom inimical to administration. Mr. Paul Benfield, one of the gentlemen returned at the last general election, becoming a profelyte to opposition, shortly after his accession to that situation, did not fail to receive a hint from the grateful doctor, that the vacation of his seat became an indispensable etiquette; in consequence of which the Chiltern Hundreds were given, and Sir James Sanderson succeeded to the representation of this immaculate body of constituents.

ANCIENT STATE.

Malmesbury, which is seated upon a hill near the banks of the river Avon, which almost surrounds

rounds it, is an ancient borough, formerly defended by a castle, now in ruins, said to have been built by a king of the Britons, who gave it the name of *Caer-Bladon*. On its being destroyed in the Saxon wars, another castle was built, named *Ingelborne*, which also gave name to the place, and was continued till *Maildolphus*, a Scotch monk, who, being delighted with the situation, lived here as an hermit; but afterwards, setting up a school, he built a little hermitage for himself and scholars, whence it was called *Maildolphusbury*, which in process of time was changed into *Malmesbury*. *Aldhelm*, one of his scholars, converted this hermitage into a stately abbey, of which he was the first abbot. *Berthwald*, by the consent of King *Etheldred*, gave *Sommerford* upon *Thames* to it; and about the year 675, *Eleutherius*, bishop of *Winchester*, gave it to the town of *Malmesbury*. King *Ethelstan*, who was buried here, was a great benefactor, and so fond of the memory of *St. Aldhelm*, that he chose him for his tutelar saint. Among other benefactors were *Edgar*, *Edward the Confessor*, *William the Conqueror*, and his queen. The monks were of the *Benedictine* order; their abbot had the dignity of the mitre, and sat in parliament.

liament. At the suppression it was endowed with a revenue of 803l. 17s. 7d. per annum. The greatest part of it, which is still standing, appears to have been very well built, especially that part which is now the parish-church. There was also a house of British nuns here, who were suppressed by St. Austin, in the seventh century, for suffering themselves to be debauched by the soldiers of the castle.

This town, which was first incorporated by Edward, king of the West Saxons, about the year 916, and afterwards by Athelstan, his son, sent members *ab origine*, and so continued to do.

CORPORATION.

By charter of King William III. it is governed by an alderman and twelve capital burgessees.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1702, Dec. 13. Agreed to be in the alderman and twelve capital burgessees.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Thirteen.

RETURN-

RETURNING OFFICER.

The alderman.

PATRON.

Dr. Wilkins.

CRICKLADE.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS borough has rendered itself remarkable by its venality, and the number of its petitions on undue elections. The first of these was in consequence of a double return of John Dewar, esq. and Samuel Peach, esq. in 1774, which election was declared void in February 1775. The second succeeded in consequence of the election of Mr. Peach to supply this vacancy; which, in the month of February, 1776, was determined against the sitting member, and in favour of John Dewar, esq. The third was the petition of Samuel Petrie, esq. against the return of Paul Benfield, esq. and John Macpherson, esq. at the general election in 1780; which

which complained, that at the late election of members to serve in parliament for the borough of Cricklade, in the county of Witto, Paul Benfield, esq. John Macpherfon, esq. and the petitioner, were candidates; and that, previous to, and during and after the poll, the said Paul Benfield and John Macpherfon, by themselves and their agents, were guilty of many gross and notorious acts of bribery and corruption, whereby many of the voters were influenced to give their votes for the said Paul Benfield and John Macpherfon, and did by themselves or their agents entertain and allow to the said electors, who had a right to vote in the said election, money, meat, drink, entertainment, or provision, and by such unlawful means; and by the threats and promises, and divers other corrupt and unwarrantable practices and proceedings, of the said Paul Benfield and John Macpherfon, their agents and abettors, they have procured themselves to be unduly returned to serve in parliament for the said borough, to the manifest injury of the petitioner, and in violation of the rights and privileges of the said borough, and of the commons of England; and that the returning officer, during the course of the said election, admitted many persons to poll

for the said Paul Benfield and John Macpherson, who were not duly qualified, and rejected the legal votes of other persons who tendered their votes in favour of the petitioner; and that, the petitioner conceives he had a great majority of the legal and uncorrupted votes at the said election, and was duly elected, and ought to have been returned; and therefore, praying the house to take the premises into consideration, and to grant unto the petitioner such relief as to the house shall seem meet.

A committee was appointed on the 4th of January 1782, to try the merits of this petition, when a scene of bribery and corruption presented itself, equal to what we have reported, either of Shoreham, Shaftesbury, Hindon, or Arundel; but to enter into a detail of the evidence, would exceed the limits of all the rest put together.

The committee reported to the house, on the 1st of February following, by Sir Harbord Harbord, their chairman,

That Paul Benfield, esq. is duly elected.

That

That John Macpherfon, efq. is not duly elected.

That Samuel Petrie, efq. is not duly elected a burgefs to ferve in parliament for the borough of Cricklade.

Sir Harbord Harbord alfo reported, “ That it
“ appears to this committee, that there was the
“ moft notorious bribery and corruption at the
“ laft election of burgeffes to ferve in parliament
“ for the borough of Cricklade, in the county of
“ Wilts.”

“ That it is the opinion of this committee,
“ that the faid bribery and corruption require the
“ moft ferious confideration of parliament.”

It was ordered, that the faid report be taken
into confideration upon the 18th of February inft.
and,

That the minutes of the proceedings taken be-
fore the faid felect committee be laid before the
houfe.

It was at the same time ordered, that no new writ for electing a burghess for the borough of Cricklade should issue, until the house shall have proceeded to take the said report into consideration.

On the 18th of February the house resolved to agree with the committee in the above resolutions, and ordered a bill to be brought in, to prevent bribery and corruption in the elections of members to serve in parliament for the said borough of Cricklade.

Three petitions were presented against the said bill by certain electors of Cricklade, on the 5th of March following; which were ordered to lie on the table, and the petitioners allowed to be heard by counsel against the bill upon the second reading.

On the 7th the petitioners were heard by counsel, and the bill was ordered to be committed.

After going through the several stages, the bill passed, and received the royal assent on the 17th of May following. In the preamble it recites, that,
“ There

“ There was the most notorious bribery and
“ corruption at the last election of burgesſes to
“ ſerve in parliament for the borough of Crick-
“ lade, in the county of Wilts; and that ſuch
“ bribery and corruption is likely to continue and
“ be practiſed in the ſaid borough in future, unleſs
“ ſome means are taken to prevent the ſame. In
“ order therefore to prevent ſuch unlawful prac-
“ tices for the future, and that the ſaid borough
“ may from henceforth be duly repreſented in
“ parliament; be it enacted by the king’s moſt
“ excellent majeſty, by and with the advice and
“ conſent of the lords ſpiritual and temporal, and
“ commons, in this preſent parliament aſſembled,
“ and by the authority of the ſame, that from
“ henceforth it ſhall and may be lawful to and for
“ every freeholder, being above the age of twenty-
“ one years, who ſhall have, within the hundreds
“ or diviſions of Highworth, Cricklade, Staple,
“ Kingsbridge, and Malmſbury, or one or more
“ of them, in the county of Wilts, a freehold of
“ the clear yearly value of forty ſhillings, to give
“ his vote at every election of a burgeſs or bur-
“ geſſes to ſerve in parliament for the ſaid bo-
“ rough of Cricklade.

“ II. And it is further enacted by the authority aforefaid, That the right of election of a member or members to ferve in parliament for the faid borough of Cricklade, fhall be, and is hereby declared to be, in fuch freeholders as aforefaid, and in the perfons who, by the custom and ufage of the faid borough, have, or fhall hereafter have, a right to vote at fuch election; and the proper officer for the time being, to whom the return of every writ or procefs does belong, is hereby required to return the perfon or perfons to ferve in parliament for the faid borough who fhall have the major number of votes of fuch freeholders and other perfons having a right to vote at fuch election; any law or ufage to the contrary notwithstanding.

“ III. It likewise provides, That fuch freeholders only fhall be entitled to vote as fhall be duly qualified to vote at elections for knights of the fhire for the faid county of Wilts, according to the laws now in being for regulating county elections.

Mr. Petrie would clearly have eftablifhed his right to a feat in parliament, upon the merits of
the

the above petition, but for the admissibility of evidence which was afterwards proved to have been perjured. His country is certainly considerably indebted to him for exposing such a system of venality; and the electors of Cricklade owe him their gratitude for restoring them to the situation of freemen.

A number of actions were afterwards brought, upon the act of 2 Geo. II. chap. 24, against the principals and agents, concerned in bribing and corrupting the electors in order to recover the penalties of five hundred pounds for each offence; when Mr. Petrie was fortunate enough to recover upon most of them.

The election next after passing this act, happened in June 1782, when the hon. George Richard St. John, and Samuel Petrie, esq. were candidates, to supply the place of Mr. Macpherson. The contest at the poll was only between Mr. St. John and Mr. Petrie, the other candidates having previously declined. The election was decided, by a great majority, in Mr. St. John's favour: but Mr. Petrie petitioned against him. This petition, which was not tried during the

session in which it was presented, was renewed in the session following, but soon after withdrawn.

At the general election, in 1784, Charles Westley Cox, esq. and Robert Adamson, esq. were candidates in the Opposition, or, what was then called, the Coalition interest, and were opposed by John Walter Heneage, esq. and Robert Nicholas, esq. who were on the side of Administration. The poll, according to the return of the bailiff, was as follows :

Mr. Cox	—	—	442
Mr. Adamson	—	—	435
Mr. Heneage	—	—	373
Mr. Nicholas	—	—	358

A petition was presented by Mr. Heneage and Mr. Nicholas, against this return; which came to be heard before a committee on the 14th of February, 1785; when it appeared, that a number of fictitious voters had been made under the right of the borough of Cricklade, where the inhabitants possessing houses, who are freeholders, copyholders, or leaseholders, for any term not less than three years, or for any such term, or greater term, determinable on life or lives, *such*
free-

freeholder, copyholder, or leaseholder, having been in the occupation of the house, for which he may claim to vote, forty days preceding the election.

One hundred and thirty-six of these votes were objected to, for having *fraudulent leases*, or none at all; some, as not having been resident *forty days*; and others, as inmates, or having split tenements. Forty votes were objected to as parish poor; besides twenty of the hundred voters who were also objected to for different reasons. It appeared in evidence, that most of these votes had been *faggoted*, and that the returning officer had been guilty of gross partiality in favour of the fitting members. On the 4th of April the committee reported to the house, " That the petitioners were duly elected, and ought to have been returned."

The chairman at the same time reported, " That the conduct of the returning officer, in taking the poll, and making the return, at the last election of members to serve in parliament for the borough of Cricklade, was partial and illegal; whereby a colourable majority was obtained

“tained on the poll, for Mr. Coxe, and Mr. Adamson.”

This report, which was taken into consideration by the house, after long and tedious debates, and repeated adjournments, the whole session was spent without coming to any conclusion upon the subject.

In 1790 Mr. Nicholas was made a commissioner of excise, and Thomas Eastcourt, esq. was chosen in his room.

At the last general election Mr. Petrie again offered himself a candidate, in opposition to the old members; when the numbers were, for

Mr. Eastcourt	—	246
Mr. Heneage	—	194
Mr. Petrie	—	111

The two former gentlemen being returned, in consequence of their majority, Mr. Petrie again became a petitioner; the merits of which contest remains over for hearing the next session of parliament.

ANCIENT STATE.

Cricklade, or Crekelade, which is a town situated on the Thames, is said to have been called *Cerigwlad*, a British word, signifying a stony or rocky country, like that in which the town is situated: but some are of opinion, that it is compounded of the Saxon word *Graecca*, a brook, and *Ladian*, to empty; because the two small streams, the Churn and Rey, here discharge themselves into the Thames. Others say, it was called Grekelade, from a Greek school, which being translated to Oxford, was the origin of the university of that city; but Camden seems to be of opinion that this story is fabulous. It is, however, of great antiquity, and was formerly a considerable place, though at present it has nothing extraordinary.

This place, which is an ancient borough by prescription, governed by a bailiff, having sent to parliament in the reign of Edw. I. returned afterwards only anno 20 Edw. II. and 8 Edw. III. and ceased again sending after Richard II. (except 1 Hen. IV. and 1, 2, 9, Henry V.) till Hen. VI.

RIGHT

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1684, April 1. Is in the freeholders and copyholders of the borough-houses, and leaseholders, for any term not under three years only.

1685, June 10. Agreed, by the counsel on both sides, to be in the freeholders, copyholders, and leaseholders for three years.

1689, April 1. Agreed, by the counsel on both sides, that the right of election is in the freeholders and copyholders of borough-houses, and leaseholders for any term not under three years.

1776, Feb. 8. Is in the inhabitants possessing houses within the said borough, who are freeholders, copyholders, or leaseholders for any term not less than three years, or for any such term, or greater term, determinable on life or lives; such freeholder, copyholder, or leaseholder, having been in the occupation of the house for which he may claim to vote, four days preceding any election.

That the houses which were in the occupation of Thomas Bound, Thomas Kilmaster, sen.

Richard

Richard Liddell, William Mabson, John Pounds, and Robert Strange, at the last election, are within the boundary of the said borough.

1782. By act of parliament is further vested in the freeholders of the five hundreds or divisions of Highworth, Cricklade, Staple, Kingsbridge, and Malmesbury.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Twelve hundred.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The bailiff.

GREAT BEDWIN.**POLITICAL CHARACTER.**

THE right of election here is in the freeholders and inhabitants of ancient burghage messuages, in number above eighty, and returned by the portreve, called mayor, who is chosen at the lord's court, and appoints a bailiff to act under him.

The

The Earl of Aylesbury is the lord of the manor; in consequence of which he has the appointment of the returning officer. His Lordship also possesses the major part of the property; so that his nomination of the representatives can neither be opposed nor contradicted, with any prospect of success.

ANCIENT STATE.

Bedwin, or Great Bedwin, which is situated seventy-two miles from London, is an ancient borough by prescription, and, in the Saxon times, is said to have been the metropolis of the jurisdiction of Cissa, viceroy of Wiltshire and Berkshire, under the king of the West Saxons, who built a castle in the south part of the town, the ditches of which are still visible. It has also a spacious church built of flints.

This very ancient borough sent to all the parliaments of King Edward I. and having returned anno 1, 8, Edward II. 36, 37, Edward III. and to seven parliaments in the reign of Richard II. intermitted sending, after the tenth year of that reign, 1 Henry IV. excepted, till 9 Henry V. since which time it has constantly returned.

RIGHT

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1729, March 29. In the freeholders and inhabitants of ancient burgage-messuages.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About eighty.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The portreve, who is called a mayor, and is chosen at the lord's court, and appoints a bailiff under him.

PATRON.

Earl of Aylesbury.

LUDGERSHALL.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS place, which in its dimensions is only a small village, has a right, of a very complicated kind, to send members to parliament, "being in
" such persons who have any estate of inheritance,
" or

“or freehold or leasehold, determinable upon
 “life or lives, within the borough, not confined
 “to entire ancient houses, or the sites of ancient
 “houses within the said borough.”

The majority of these estates was formerly the property of George Augustus Selwyn, esq. of facetious memory; at whose demise they descended to the present Lord Viscount Sydney: the minority of them is the property of Mr. Everett, a banker in London.—This division of local suffrage has been the cause of litigation between the parties, and produced a petition to the house of commons, against the return of the two members in the interest of Lord Sydney; which being heard in 1791, was determined in their favour.

Mr. Selwyn, one of the fitting members, dying in the interim, a new writ was accordingly issued; when, at the ensuing election, another contest arose, Samuel Smith, esq. being proposed a candidate in the interest of Lord Sydney, and Mr. Alderman Newnham in that of Mr. Everett; when Mr. Smith was returned, and a petition, of a similar tendency with the last, was presented to the house of commons; the merits of which have

have not as yet come on to be heard. The matter in question, between the contending parties, depends upon the legality of splitting those estates to which the right of voting is annexed : the number of votes, in Browne Willis's time, were seventy ; but they are now divided into one hundred and forty-nine, and are held by the tenants and friends of the two proprietors, who reside in different parts of Wiltshire and Hampshire, but who are kind enough to come here, at the time of election, to perform the ceremonial part of delegating a representative for this borough to the legislative assembly of the British nation.

ANCIENT STATE.

Luggershall, Ludgershall, or Lurgershall, which is situated fifty-seven miles west of London, is an ancient borough by prescription, governed by a bailiff, annually chosen at the court-leet of the lord of the manor.

This borough, which sent to all the parliaments in the reign of King Edw. I. made three returns

in the reign of Edw. II. and three in the reign of Edw. III. ceased sending after 9 Ric. II. till 9 Hen. V.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1689, Feb. 11. Is in such persons as have an estate of inheritance, or freehold or leasehold, determinable upon life, within the said borough.

1705, Jan. 17. Is in the freeholders or leaseholders of the said borough, determinable upon life or lives.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About seventy.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The lord's bailiff.

PATRON.

Lord Viscount Sydney.

OLD

O L D S A R U M .

P O L I T I C A L C H A R A C T E R .

THIS borough was quite decayed, and reduced to only one house, in the time of Browne Willis, occasioned by the translation of the old city to the new one, which is about a mile lower on the river, of which there is now only a small vestige remaining. The members are chosen by a bailiff and six burgesses, who are appointed by Lord Camelford, the lord of the borough, and entrusted by him with burgage scites.

This borough, with the *assistance* of Midhurst, sends four members to parliament, although there is not a single house standing, nor a person living, within the limits of either, to be represented. The boroughs of Gatton and Castle Rising have each *two houses only*, and they have each *two representatives*.

Thus is the legislative part of our constitution made, of some members who represent neither houses nor persons, of others, who are the repre-

sentatives only of single individuals, and of many, whose constituents do not exceed ten in number.

ANCIENT STATE.

Old Sarum, which was the Roman Sorbiodunum, was formed upon one of the most elegant designs that can be imagined, and was probably a fortress of the ancient Britons. Whether Julius Cæsar pushed his conquests thus far, is disputed; but that it was frequented by the Roman emperors is certain, from the coins of Constance, Magnentius, Constantine, and Crispus, having been frequently found there. Kenrick, the Saxon, after having conquered the Britons in 553, was the first that got possession of this place, where he frequently resided; and his posterity, being the West Saxon kings, continued here till Egbert brought the whole heptarchy under his dominion. Edgar, his distant successor, called a great council or parliament here, in the year 960, in which were enacted several laws for the government of the church and state. In the year 1003, which was the year after King Etheldred's general massacre of the Danes, King Swaine invaded it with a great army; and having vanquished the inhabitants, took the city, which
he

he pillaged and burnt, and returned to his ships with great wealth.

After this calamity, the city did not recover its ancient splendor, till Lanfrank, archbishop of Canterbury, in the year 1070, decreed in a synod, that such bishops as were settled in small towns, should remove to places of greater note and fame; upon which the united sees of Ramsbury, and Sherborn in Dorsetshire, were, in 1072, translated, by bishop Herman, to Old Sarum. He there began to erect a cathedral, which was finished in the year 1092, and dedicated to the Virgin Mary. But it is said, that, the day after its consecration, the steeple was set on fire by lightning,

The city, notwithstanding, began to flourish greatly; inasmuch, that the Norman kings, after the death of William I. frequently resided here, and held their parliaments. In the reign of King Stephen, a difference arising between him and the bishop, the king seized the castle, and placed in it a governor and a garrison. This occasioned frequent disputes between the bishop and the soldiers, whose being here was now considered as a vio-

lation of the liberties of the church. This, with the want of water, made the bishop and canons resolve to remove to a more commodious place; but they could not put their purposes in execution till the reign of Henry III. when bishop Poor laid the foundation of a cathedral, in a place called Merryfield, about a mile to the south-east of the old one; and this new church, which was almost forty years in building, gave rise to the city of Salisbury, and is a magnificent structure, still in being. It at the same time proved the entire destruction of Old Sarum; for the materials of the houses, castle, and walls, being removed, in order to form the buildings of the new city, this ancient one was gradually destroyed. In the reign of Henry VII. it was in a manner entirely deserted; and for many years past, there has been only a farm-house left, and even that is now demolished; notwithstanding which, it is still called the borough of Old Sarum, and sends two members to parliament, who are chosen by the proprietors of certain lands; but whom they can justly be said to represent, it is difficult to determine.

This town first returned members to parliament, 23 Edw. I. and then intermitted sending
till

till 34 Edw. III. since which time it has constantly returned.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1688, Nov. 14. Is in the freeholders, being burgage-holders of the said borough.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Nominally SEVEN, but actually only ONE.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The bailiff,

PATRON.

Lord Camelford.

WOOTON BASSET.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS small borough was strongly contested in the year 1784, between the interests of the Earl of Clarendon, and Lord Viscount Bolingbroke.

George Tierney, esq. was a candidate in the interest of the former; and the present Lord North, and the Hon. R. S. Conway, in that of the latter. These two last gentlemen had a majority on the poll, and were accordingly returned; but a petition was presented by George Tierney, esq. which was heard in the month of April, 1785, when the committee decided in favour of the fitting members.

Since the above contest, these noblemen have agreed, to avoid future litigation and expence, to permit each other to return one member.

ANCIENT STATE.

Wotton Bassett, or Wooton Bassett, which is a borough town by charter and prescription, is situated in a large park, near the forest of Bedern, at the distance of seventy-eight miles from London.

This borough first sent members to parliament in the 25th year of the reign of Henry VI.

CORPORATION.

It is governed by a mayor, two aldermen, and twelve capital burgessees.

RIGHT OF ELECTION

Is in the inhabitants paying scot and lot.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About one hundred.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

PATRONS.

Earl of Clarendon and Lord Viscount Bolingbroke.

MARLBOROUGH.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

IN this town, which, for the number of its inhabitants, and the trade it carries on, may hold a rank equal to some of the first in the county, the right of voting for members of parliament is in the corporation only, consisting of a mayor and two bailiffs, chosen out of twenty capital burgessees. Here, like as at Garton, two men,
who

who are a majority of the electors, return two representatives : now, according to the principles of the constitution of this country, and the common acceptance of the word *representative*, these persons, who are thus elected, are bound, not only to listen to the instructions of their constituents, but also to obey them : suppose, therefore, this possible case ; that a subject should be debated in parliament, in which the interests of this country were deeply concerned, but where, at the same time, the good of the whole might be injurious to, and militate against, that of those two individuals ; would not the members be, upon every account, bound to give their voices in the senate agreeably to the will of those who sent them thither, without consulting the benefit of those with whose welfare they are not so immediately concerned?

ANCIENT STATE.

Marlborough derives its name from its situation at the bottom of a chalk hill, anciently called Marle ; it stands on a Roman road, and was the Roman station called Cunetio. The ruins of a castle, apparently of Roman work, are still visible.

A Par-

A parliament was once held here; and a law for the suppression of tumults, still retains the title of the statutes of Marlborough.

It is an ancient borough by prescription, and gives the title of duke to the family of Spencer.

The remains of a priory, of the Sempringham order, the gate-house of which still remains, and which subsisted before the reign of King John, are still to be seen here.

It was a royal foundation, dedicated to St. Margaret; and its revenue was valued, at the suppression, at 30l. 9s. 6d. a year. Here was an hospital for a master and several poor sick brethren, in the beginning of the reign of King Henry III. It was dedicated to St. Thomas of Canterbury, and in the time of king Richard the Second, was annexed to the above priory. Here was also an hospital for brethren and sisters, before the sixteenth year of the reign of King John: it was dedicated to St. John the Baptist, and its revenues valued, at the suppression, at 6l. 18s. 4d.
per

per annum. In this town was likewise a house of White friars, founded in 1316, by John Goodwin and William Remesbesch, merchants. '

This borough sent members to parliament *ab origine*.

CORPORATION.

It consists of a mayor and two bailiffs, chosen out of twenty capital burgesses.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1717, 13 May. Is in the mayor and burgesses of the said borough only.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

THREE.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

PATRON.

Earl of Aylesbury.

WOR-

WORCESTERSHIRE.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS county is not under the immediate influence of either aristocracy or administration. The Earl of Coventry, Lord Foley, and Lord Somers, have residences and considerable estates here ; but an union of their interests could not, in opposition to the inclinations of the independent freeholders, procure a return of the members to represent it in parliament. If the above noblemen should make such an attempt, we doubt not but that their expectations would be frustrated, and their designs rendered abortive, by the vigorous exertions of the people.

The political history of this county has been rendered remarkable for the unconstitutional interference of the bishop of this diocese, at the general election in 1702, in the first year of the reign of Queen Anne.

A com-

A complaint was made to the house on the 2d of November following, that the Lord Bishop of Worcester, and Lloyd his son, had been guilty of a breach of privilege at the last election for that county. The same was ordered to be taken into consideration on the 18th of the same month; when the house, according to the order of the day, proceeded to take into consideration the complaint of Sir John Pakington, the 2d inst. against the Lord Bishop of Worcester, and Mr. Lloyd, his son, relating to the rights and privileges of the house of commons: and Sir John Pakington, in his place, acquainted the house, that he had reduced the matter of the said complaint into several heads; which he read in his place, and is as follows: viz.

“ 1st. That, soon after the parliament rose, the Bishop of Worcester took upon him to send to me to desist from standing to be elected knight for that county, and to threaten me, that if I did not desist, he should think himself obliged to speak against me to his clergy.

“ 2dly, He sent some letters himself, and his secretary sent others, to several of his clergy, with directions to make what interest they could
against

against me in their several parishes; and where they could not prevail, with such who voted singly for me in the last election, to give a vote for one or both the other candidates, they should desire them to stay at home; and in order to this, his lordship sent them copies of the poll of their respective parishes.

“ 3dly, He aspersed me to his clergy, branding me and my ancestors with several vices; and, at his confirmation and visitations, solicited his clergy to vote against me, representing me as very unfit to serve in parliament, and threatening them with his displeasure, if they did not vote against me.

“ 4thly, He aspersed me and my ancestors to several of the laity, who were his tenants, and threatened them, that, if they would not vote against me, they should never renew any estate under him; and that he would set such marks upon them, that his successors should not suffer them nor their children to renew any more.

“ 5thly, Mr. Lloyd, the bishop's son, aspersed me, and gave scandalous characters of me to several
free-

freeholders, whom he solicited to vote against me, and told them I voted for bringing in a *French* government.

“ 6thly, The bishop’s secretary aspersed me to several freeholders in the like manner; representing me as unfit to sit in the house, threatening them with the bishop’s displeasure, and said they might as well vote for the Prince of Wales, as for me.”

After which, the witnesses to the respective heads were called in, and examined at the bar thereunto; and then they severally withdrew.

Resolved, nemine contradicente, “ That Sir John
 “ Pakington has, by evidence, fully made
 “ out the charge which he exhibited against
 “ the Lord Bishop of Worcester.”

Resolved, nemine contradicente, “ That Sir John
 “ Pakington has fully made out the charge
 “ against Mr. Lloyd, the said Lord Bishop’s
 “ son.”

Resolved,

Resolved, " That it appears to this house, that
 " the proceedings of William Lord Bishop
 " of Worcester, his son, and his agents, in
 " order to the hindering the election of a
 " member for the county of Worcester, have
 " been malicious, unchristian, and arbitrary,
 " in high violation of the liberties and pri-
 " vileges of the commons of England."

Resolved, " That an humble address be presented
 " to her majesty, that she will be graciously
 " pleased to remove William Lord Bishop
 " of Worcester from being almoner to her
 " majesty."

Resolved, " That the said resolution and address
 " be presented to her majesty by such mem-
 " bers of this house as are of her majesty's
 " most honourable privy-council."

Ordered, " That the further consideration of the
 " matter relating to the Lord Bishop of
 " Worcester, be adjourned till this day
 " se'nnight."

Ordered, "That Mr. Attorney-General do prosecute Mr. Lloyd, the Lord Bishop of Worcester's son, for his said offences, after his privilege, as a member of the lower house of convocation, is out."

The lords took the alarm at these proceedings of the commons against a member of their house, and endeavoured to screen him from their resentment. An address from the lords to the queen was agreed to, in which they stated, "That it was the undoubted right of every lord of parliament, and of every subject of England, to have an opportunity of making his defence before he suffers any sort of punishment, and therefore humbly desired her majesty that she would be pleased not to remove the Lord Bishop of Worcester from the place of lord almoner, nor to shew any mark of her displeasure towards him, till he be found guilty of some crime by due course of law." This address being presented to the queen, she returned answer, "That she agreed that every peer and lord of parliament, and indeed every other person, ought to have an opportunity of being heard to any matters objected against him before he be punished; that

“ that she had not yet received any complaint
 “ against the Bishop of Worcester; but she looked
 “ upon it as her undoubted right to continue or
 “ displace any servant attending upon her own
 “ person, when she should think proper.” The
 lords upon this answer, resolved the same day un-
 animously, “ That no lord of their house ought to
 “ suffer any sort of punishment by any proceed-
 “ ings of the house of commons, otherwise than
 “ according to the known and ancient rules and
 “ methods of parliament.”

Mr. Comptroller reported to the house of com-
 mons that their resolutions, and address to her
 majesty, for the removing *William* Lord Bishop
 of *Worcester* from being lord almoner to her
 majesty, had been presented to her majesty, and
 that her majesty had been pleased to give this
 most gracious answer.

“ I am very sorry that there is occasion for this
 “ address against the Bishop of *Worcester*. I shall
 “ order and direct, that he shall no longer continue
 “ to supply the place of almoner; but I will put
 “ another in his room, to perform that office.”

Resolved, " That the most humble thanks of
" this house be returned to her majesty, for
" her majesty's most gracious answer to their
" address relating to *William* Lord Bishop
" of *Worcester*."

Ordered, " That Mr. Comptroller of her ma-
" jesty's household do return the said most
" humble thanks of this house to her ma-
" jesty."

March 25, *Ordered*, " That the evidence given
" in at the bar of this house, upon the charge
" of Sir John Pakington against *William*
" Lord Bishop of Worcester, and Mr. Lloyd,
" his son, be printed, together with the pro-
" ceedings of that house thereupon."

Ordered, " That the week's books, in relation
" to the said evidence, be examined, and
" that Mr. Speaker do take care of the
" printing the said evidence and proceed-
" ings."

Ordered, " That the further consideration of
" the matter relating to the Lord Bishop
" of Worcester be adjourned till this day
" fe'nnight."

On

On the 23d, 1703, the solicitor-general reported to the house the proceedings which had been made against Mr. Lloyd, the Lord Bishop of Worcester's son.

ANCIENT STATE.

Worcestershire, which is an inland county, bounded by Staffordshire on the north; Warwickshire, on the east; Gloucestershire, on the south; and by Herefordshire and Shropshire, on the west; is thirty-six miles in length, twenty-eight in breadth, and one hundred and thirty miles in circumference; and, in the time of the Romans, was, according to Camden, inhabited by the Cornavii.

During the heptarchy it was part of the kingdom of Mercia, and was called by the Saxons Wirecesterscyre, which is thought to have arisen from the forest of Wire, part of which is still in being about Bewdley, and formerly extended as far as Worcester, whence that city was called the fortress of Wire. A part of the inhabitants were called Wiccii; a name which some suppose was given them on account of the winding course of the Severn, termed Wic by the Saxons; while others maintain that it was derived from the salt-pits, named *wiches*.

The country of Wiccia had a viceroy of its own, as we are informed by Florence of Worcester, who says, that Oshere, viceroy of the Wiccians, persuaded king Ethelred to constitute a bishop over his country, that it might have the honour of having one of its own. When this was done, the bishop fixed his see at Worcester, but was called the bishop of Wiccia.

While the heptarchy continued, it was governed under the Mercian kings by an earl, who had a kind of regal power, which seems to have been greater than in other places.

This county is divided into seven hundreds, containing the city of Worcester, and ten market-towns, viz. Bewdley, Bromsgrove, Droitwich, Dudley, Evesham, Kidderminster, Parshore, Ship-ton-upon-Stour, Stourbridge, Tenbury, and Upton. It is in the province of Canterbury, and diocese of Worcester ; contains one hundred and fifty-two parishes, and sends nine members to parliament ; two knights of the shire, two members for the city of Worcester, two for the borough of Droitwich, two for Evesham, and one for Bewdley.

WOR-

WORCESTER.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

WE enter with reluctance upon the painful task of introducing the political character of a populous and opulent city, under the stigma of venality and corruption. To the honour of the majority of its electors, however, and to that persevering spirit which they manifested through three expensive contests, and the trial of as many petitions, it affords us the satisfaction of demonstrating, that practices subversive of national liberty cannot be used in popular elections without detection, nor escape under the ordeal of justice without punishment.

Upon the death of Henry Crabb Boulton, esq. in 1773, who was one of the representatives for this city, Sir Watkin Lewes was invited, by a committee of the independent electors, deputed by them for that purpose, to become a candidate to supply the vacancy. Thomas Bates Rous, esq. was opposed to him by the interest of the ministry,

P 4

the

the corporation, and the Earl of Coventry, who is recorder of this city, and has a seat in the neighbourhood. Mr. Rous was returned by the sheriff, after a poll of several days; and on the 20th of January, 1774, a petition was presented to the house of commons, by Sir Watkin Lewis, setting forth, "That, at the late election of a member to represent the city of Worcester in parliament, in the room of the late Henry Crabb Boulton, esq. deceased, the petitioner, and Thomas Bates Rous, esq. were candidates; and that the said Thomas Bates Rous, by himself and agents, after the said vacancy happened, and previous to and during the poll, was guilty of bribing and corrupting, and attempting to bribe and corrupt, those who had a right to vote in the said election, in order to procure himself to be elected to serve in parliament for the said city; and that many of the aldermen of the said city acted as agents for the said Thomas Bates Rous, and also did bribe, and attempt to bribe, with money and otherwise, a great many freemen of the said city, to induce them to give their votes for the said Thomas Bates Rous, at the said election; and that William Mathews, esq. sheriff and returning officer of the said city, acted partially and unfairly, before and during the poll, in rejecting good votes
for

for the petitioner, and admitting persons not qualified to vote for the said Thomas Bates Rous, and in many other respects was guilty of partiality in the execution of his office; and that, by these and other illegal means, the said Thomas Bates Rous procured a majority of votes upon the poll, and was returned to serve in parliament for the said city, in prejudice of the petitioner, and in open defiance of the law, and the freedom of elections."

On the 2d of February following, a committee was appointed to try the merits of this petition, who, on the 8th of the same month, reported to the house,

"That Thomas Bates Rous, esq. the fitting member, is not duly elected." And also,

"That Sir Watkin Lewes, knt. is not duly elected to serve in this present parliament for the city of Worcester.

A new writ was therefore ordered to be issued for a new election.

At

At this second election Colonel Lechmere was set up by the ministerial party, in opposition to Sir Watkin Lewes, and was returned by a small majority; but as the parliament at that time was nearly expiring, and the dissolution almost daily expected, the citizens of Worcester deferred contesting their cause any further, till the general election.

When the dissolution took place, in September following, Mr. Rous was again a candidate, on the old interest, in conjunction with Mr. Walsh, the late member; and Sir Watkin Lewes, and Edward Bearcroft, the counsel, were opposed to them by the independent interest of the city of Worcester. At the close of the poll the numbers were,

For Mr. Rous,	—	981
Mr. Walsh,	—	893
Sir Watkin Lewes,		736
Mr. Bearcroft,	—	312

Upon which the two former were returned,

On the 31st of October following, Sir Watkin Lewes presented a second petition to the house,
setting

setting forth, " That, at the late election of members to represent the city of Worcester in parliament, John Walsh, and Thomas Bates Rous, esqrs. and the petitioner, were candidates; and that, previous to and during the late election, the said Mr. Walsh and Mr. Rous did, by themselves and their agents, bribe and corrupt, and attempt to bribe and corrupt, those who had a right to vote at the said election, in order to procure themselves to be elected, to serve in parliament for the said city; and that, previous to and at the said election, William Mathews, esq. mayor of the said city, and several aldermen and justices of the said city, with many of the common-council, acted as agents for the said John Walsh and Thomas Bates Rous, and threatened, and publicly canvassed and solicited great numbers of the freemen of the said city to vote for Mr. Walsh and Mr. Rous; and promised that they should be set down as constables, and have a certain reward for their votes; and also did bribe, and attempt to bribe, with money, and otherwise corrupt, a great many freemen of the said city, to induce them to vote for the said John Walsh and Thomas Bates Rous, or one of them, at the said election; and
were

were guilty of divers other corrupt and illegal practices, in order to procure a majority for the said Mr. Walsh and Mr. Rous; and that, by means thereof, and other undue influence, the said mayor, aldermen, and common-council, as agents for the said Mr. Walsh and Mr. Rous, procured many freemen to vote in their interest for the said Mr. Walsh and Mr. Rous, who would otherwise have voted for the petitioner; and that the said mayor, several of the aldermen and justices of the said city, and their town-clerk, for several days before and during the election, met together, nominated, appointed, and swore in, many freemen, and, as the petitioner believes, to the number of three hundred and upwards, to be constables, under a promise from such persons that they would vote for Mr. Walsh and Mr. Rous; for which they should have certain rewards in money; which was afterwards paid to them out of the money and funds of the corporation of the said city, or by the said Mr. Walsh and Mr. Rous; by which means the said mayor and aldermen did corruptly obtain a majority of votes for Mr. Rous and Mr. Walsh upon the poll; and that a peer of this realm, and a lord of parliament, did,
by

by himself and his agents, interfere in the said election, by canvassing and soliciting votes on behalf of the said John Walfh, and using threats to intimidate the freemen from giving their votes to the petitioner, in violation of the privileges of the house, the freedom of election, and a high infringement of the rights of the commons of Great Britain; and that John Williams, gentleman, sheriff, and returning officer of the said city, acted partially and unfairly, before and during the election, in rejecting good votes for the petitioner, and admitting persons not qualified to vote, for the said John Walfh and Thomas Bates Rous, and in many other respects was guilty of partiality in the execution of his office; and that, by these and other illegal means, the said John Walfh and Thomas Bates Rous procured a majority upon the poll, and were returned to serve in parliament for the said city, in prejudice of the petitioner, who had a majority of legal votes, and ought to have been returned; and therefore praying the house to take the premises into consideration, and to grant him such relief therein as shall, upon examination, appear to be just."

The

The objects of the petitioner were,

1st, To prove that bribery had been committed by the sitting members, or their agents; and thereby to make the election void, as to them.

2dly, To disqualify such a number of the voters for the sitting members, and to add such a number to the poll of the petitioner, as to leave a majority in his favour, and entitle him to be declared duly elected.

3dly, To induce the committee to make a special report to the house of the various matters particularly alledged in the petition against the sitting members, the corporation, the returning officer, the peer whose influence was complained of, and the corrupted voters.

On the first head, witnesses were produced, who swore to positive acts of bribery and promises, by Mr. Walsh himself, and by his agents. There was no attempt to charge Mr. Rous directly; but it was contended, that Mr. Walsh, and his agents, were to be considered as agents for Mr. Rous, who, therefore, must be affected by what they had done.

On the second head there were the following objections to different classes of voters for the fitting members.

1st, To a great number, that their votes had been procured by money or promises. This was the main point of the case; being sufficient, if proved to the full extent, to have given the petitioner a majority over both the fitting members.

By a charter of James I. the city of Worcester, which was, before that time, and continues to be, a county of itself, is incorporated by the name of the mayor, aldermen, and citizens of the city of Worcester. There is a common-council, composed of two bodies, one of twenty-four, the other of forty-eight, making together seventy-two common-councilmen. The number of citizens is indefinite; the mayor and six aldermen are chosen annually out of the twenty-four by the seventy-two. These six aldermen, and the mayor, are, by their offices, justices of the peace for the city.

The

The day before the election began, the common-council, the greatest part of whom were in the interest of the fitting members, made the following resolutions and order.

11th Oct. 1774. *Resolved*, " That it be recommended to the mayor and justices to appoint such a number of constables as they shall think proper, to preserve the peace during the election of members to represent this city in parliament."

Ordered, " That the expences attending such appointment be defrayed by this corporation."

Accordingly, about three hundred were sworn in; and they received one shilling and sixpence a day from the chamberlain, out of the money of the corporation, for a week: all the constables, except about ten or twelve, were freemen, and voted for the fitting members. At former elections it had been usual to appoint a certain number of special constables to keep the peace; but they were not so numerous as at this election; and they were paid, in equal proportions, by the candidates,

candidates, and not by the corporation. There were several of the persons appointed, on this present occasion, lame, or so infirm as to be incapable of doing the duty of the office ; inasmuch that, a riot having happened during the course of the poll, it was thought necessary to swear in about ten or twelve able-bodied watermen. These watermen were the only constables who were not freemen.

From the circumstances just stated, it was contended, that the appointment of so many freemen to be constables was only colourable ; that being all voters, and having voted for the sitting members, the money paid to them must be considered as bribes given them by the corporation, who were agents of Walsh and Rous ; that all the votes of the constables therefore ought to be struck off the poll.

Besides this, there were witnesses who said, that two agents of Walsh, in their presence, had offered, on the 30th of September, to a company of about twenty-five freemen, to make them constables, if they would vote for Walsh and Rous ; and said they should have a guinea from

each candidate ; and that many of them accepted on that condition. One of the witnesses said, he asked whether he might not be half a constable, if he polled for Walsh ; and that he was told he could not be a constable, unless he would vote for Walsh ; several persons swore to declarations of voters who were made constables ; that they had received money from or on the behalf of Walsh ; and that they were promised more.

There was a considerable number of out-voters, resident in London, Birmingham, Kidderminster, and other places, whose expences were defrayed by the sitting members. It was also sworn, that they were promised money for their trouble by the agents. Many declared that they had voted, in expectation of a reward ; some, that they had received the money after they had polled.

On Thursday the 18th of April, the committee, by their chairman, informed the house, that they had determined,

That the two sitting members were duly elected.

No

No vacancy for this city happened afterward till the general election of 1780, when Mr. Rous was again a candidate, on the interest of the corporation, in conjunction with the Hon. William Ward, now Lord Viscount Dudley, and again opposed by Sir Watkin Lewes, on the independent interest. Mr. Rous and Mr. Ward were successful; and on the 20th of November following, a third petition was presented to the house, from the freemen of Worcester, complaining, "That, at the last election of members to serve in parliament for the city of Worcester, the Right Hon. Sir Watkin Lewes, knt. now lord-mayor of the city of London, the Hon. William Ward, and Thomas Bates Rous, esq. were candidates; and that several of the aldermen, justices, and others, of the said city, hawked about, and offered the representation of the said city for sale, at the last general election, for a sum of 4000*l.* or other large sum of money; and did treat with several persons for that purpose; and that, in consequence of bribery and corruption, and by undue and oppressive influence, committed and practised by the said William Ward, or several of the aldermen, justices, and others, of the said city, as agents for the said William Ward, a majority of

votes was procured upon the poll, contrary to the general sense and wishes of the freemen, who would otherwise have elected the said Sir Watkin Lewes, if it had not been for illegal means made use of in favour of the said Mr. Ward, as aforesaid."

This petition was tried by a committee appointed the 6th of February, 1781, who, on the 15th of the said month, reported to the house,

" That the Hon. William Ward was duly
" elected."

The limits of our work will not suffer us to go at large into the evidence on these several petitions; nor would it prove more than what appears almost through every case which comes before the house of commons;—that corruption prevails;—and that the influence of magistrates and corporations is generally exerted to destroy the freedom of elections;—that freemen and burgesses are admitted, or refused their admission, by corporations, with little or no regard to claims legally and justly founded, but merely to suit the purposes of whatever party the leading men in each city or borough

borough may find it their interest to espouse ; and even the poor-rates in scot-and-lot boroughs are corrupted into engines of despotism. The taxing a number of persons who have no right, and omitting another description, who possess or occupy rateable houses, has been the means of giving a colourable majority in many elections ; but we shall subjoin to our account of this city an address to the freemen of Worcester, published shortly after the decision of one of the committees, under the authority of the candidate, which will explain, more forcibly than we can express, his sentiments and feelings upon the occasion.

From the Worcester Journal.

To the FREEMEN of the CITY of WORCESTER,

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ Permit me in this public manner to return
 “ you my sincere and most unfeigned thanks for
 “ the very honourable and independent support
 “ I have received from you, and to those honest
 “ friends who afforded me their voluntary protec-
 “ tion at the last election, against the insults of
 “ mercenaries, hired, under the colour of con-
 “ stables, to prostitute their suffrages.

Q3

“ I beg

“ I beg likewise to add my thanks to those persons who gave their testimony from a desire of public justice.

“ In vain did we confide in the justice of our cause ; in vain did we expect that a committee of the house of commons would stigmatise bribery, corruption, and perjury : the majority of that committee best know how they can account to their consciences and their country, for having given a verdict upon oath, importing, in effect, that there was no bribery, no unconstitutional, no undue influence, in the last election for the city of Worcester ; or that promises made, and money given to electors, before and at the time of the election, was not done for the purpose corruptly to procure their votes. I will not say all that might be said upon this verdict, all that truth might dictate, as facts best speak for themselves ; but this I will say, the committee, by their late determination, have dreadfully and mournfully disappointed the just expectations of the public.

“ My concern arises, not so much on my own account, as on that of a great city struggling
“ for

“ for its independence : which, by such a deter-
 “ mination, is become the property of the East-
 “ India company. I deplore with you the fallen
 “ virtue of our country, and that bribery is now
 “ permitted to stalk triumphant through the land,
 “ corrupting the fountain of public security. I
 “ feel the more, as it involves in its consequences
 “ the downfall of an act of parliament, which
 “ the people have been taught to look up to as a
 “ security for the freedom of elections.

“ I should be wanting in that duty which I owe
 “ to you and the public, were I not to take notice
 “ of the interposition of the house, in depriving
 “ me of my rightful challenges, and polluting
 “ the streams of public justice.

“ The fitting members, though notoriously
 “ known to have been supported by the same in-
 “ terest, were allowed to strike off twenty-four to
 “ my twelve ; whereby a majority was procured.
 “ Whether they were worthy to sit in judgment
 “ on the rights of freemen, I shall leave to you and
 “ the whole kingdom to determine, by their late
 “ report.

Q 4

“ There

" There is no person who entertains a higher
 " respect and reverence than I do for the different
 " orders of the State ; it was that respect and re-
 " vrence which induced me to complain of the
 " encroachments of the aristocratic power. I la-
 " ment that the people, for whose benefit all
 " governments are instituted, have lost their
 " weight in the legislature of this country : I la-
 " ment that an open violation of your privileges
 " should pass unnoticed by the guardians of the
 " rights of the people.

" In this long, expensive, and unequal contest,
 " every art has been practiced to harass and
 " distress me, for having dared to assert your
 " rights. I am, however, happy in the reflexion,
 " that I have discharged my duty to you, gentle-
 " men, and to my country.

" I have the honour to be, with the greatest
 " esteem and regard,

" Your obliged and

" faithful humble servant,

" WATKIN LEWES."

As a testimony of the public approbation, the
 city of London unanimously voted their thanks
 to Sir Watkin Lewes, by their corporation, for the
 manly

manly defence he had made in support of the freedom of election; and the ladies of Worcester presented Lady Lewes with a complete set of Worcester-manufactured poreclain, emblazoned with the arms of Sir Watkin Lewes and those of the city of Worcester, with a silver table engraved with apposite devices, and finished with exquisite taste and magnificence.

At the general election in 1784, the Hon. William Ward, and Samuel Smith, esq. of Aldermanbury, were chosen without opposition. Upon Mr. Ward's succeeding to the peerage, Mr. Wigley was elected in his room. A contest arose at the last general election, the two late members being opposed by Mr. Lechmere, the barrister; when the numbers at the final close of the poll were, for

Edmund Wigley, esq.	—	959
Edmund Lechmere, esq.	—	892
Samuel Smith, esq.	—	692

ANCIENT STATE.

Worcester, the chief town in the county, which is delightfully seated on the eastern bank of the Severn, is generally supposed to have been known to the Romans by the names Branovium and Branogenium,

nogenium, though it has been long since called in Latin, as it is now, Wigornia; and is thought to have been one of the chief cities built by them, in order to curb the Britons who dwelt beyond the Severn. It was called by the Saxons Weogare-ceaster, Wegeorna-ceaster, or Wire-ceaster, which are generally supposed to be a contraction of Wicware-cester, Wigora or Wigra-ceaster, signifying the city of the men of Wiccia. It was made the see of a bishop by Ethelred, king of the Mercians, who founded a cathedral here, the first bishop of which was Boselus, who was consecrated in the year 680.

This city has several times been burnt, particularly in 1041, by king Hardicanute, to punish the inhabitants, who, being provoked by the heavy taxes he laid upon them, killed his collectors; at which he was so enraged, that he massacred them all, except a few that escaped into Beverly, an island in the river, set fire to the town, and ravaged the country round it. However, in some measure, it recovered itself from this disaster; but in the year 1080, in the reign of William Rufus, Roger de Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury, coming with a great body of Welchmen, burnt
the

the suburbs, and attacked the city; but the townsmen, shutting the gates, conveyed their wives, children, and goods, into the castle, and then made a brave resistance. Wolfstan, the bishop, perceiving that some of the enemy had left the siege to ravage the country, encouraged the inhabitants to make a sally, which they did with such advantage, that they killed and took prisoners about five thousand men, and obliged the rest to raise the siege. In the year 1113, it was again nearly destroyed by a casual fire; the castle itself was entirely consumed, and the roof of the cathedral received great damage. This is supposed to have been done clandestinely by the Welsh, because this city served to curb their hostilities; in consequence of which Henry I. raised a great army, and marching into Wales, made a prodigious slaughter, and reduced them to such extremities, that they submitted to his mercy.

In the civil wars between King Stephen and the Empress Matilda, the King finding that William Beauchamp of Elmey, to whom the city and castle belonged, was engaged in the interest of Matilda, he dispossessed him of both, and gave them to the Earls of Mellent and Leiceſter; but afterwards

terwards, disapproving of his conduct, he resolved to take the castle from him ; for which purpose he assaulted Worcester with a great army, and having taken the city, burnt it to the ground, and returned with a great booty. After Stephen's death, the Empress restored the city and castle to William Beauchamp and his heirs. The misfortunes of the city did not end here : for in the year 1175, a church, which had been lately erected, fell down ; and in 1202, the city was again destroyed by fire ; in 1216, the city was taken by the Earl of Chester, and the church plundered ; two years after which, the two lesser towers of the church were thrown down by a storm. In short, this city has been attacked or besieged, and suffered, more or less, in all the civil wars between the houses of York and Lancaster ; and here was fought the decisive battle between Charles II. and Cromwell ; but from each of these disasters it always soon recovered, and continued, for the most part, in a flourishing condition.

In ancient times the kings of England were accustomed to keep their Christmas in some great town ; and accordingly we find, that in the year

1130 King Henry I. kept his Christmas here, as did Henry II. in 1158, and King John in 1214.

This city, which is a county of itself, was anciently governed by two bailiffs, two aldermen, and a common-council, and sent members to parliament *ab origine*.

CORPORATION.

By charter of James I. it consists of a mayor, recorder, sheriffs, six aldermen, twenty-four common-councilmen, and forty-eight assistants.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1693, Feb. 7. Is in the freemen not receiving alms.

1747, Feb. 11. Is in the citizens of the said city not receiving alms, *and admitted to their freedom by birth, or by servitude, or by redemption*, in order to trade within the said city.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Seventeen hundred.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The sheriff.

DROIT.

DROITWICH.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE right of election in this borough is in two bailiffs, a recorder, and eleven burgessees, who are styled the corporation of the salt-springs of Droitwich.

This place is under the influence of Lord Foley and Sir Edward Winnington, bart. the latter of whom derives it from the family of Salway, of Stanford, in this county, and is now one of its members; the other is the Hon. Andrew Foley, second brother to Lord Foley.

Sir Herbert Pakington has also an interest in this borough, but not sufficiently strong to oppose the present members.

ANCIENT STATE.

Droitwich, or Durtwich, which is supposed to have received its name from its salt-pits, anciently called *wiches*, and its dirty situation upon the river Salwarp, consists only of about four hundred houses, and yet has four churches. It is famous
for

for falt, which is made here in vast quantities. In Domesday-book it is said, that every week, in the season of wealing, they paid off a tax of sixteen bullions; which is sufficient to prove, that falt was made here long before the Conqueror's survey was compiled. Mention is also made, in the reign of King Athelstan, of the falt produced in this town.

This borough having sent to all the parliaments of Edward I. and 2, 4, Edward II. ceased sending till Philip and Mary restored it in 1554.

CORPORATION.

This place, which was originally incorporated by King John, and afterwards by charter of *in-speximus* of James I. consists of two bailiffs, a recorder, and eleven burgeses.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1690, Nov. 11. Is in the burgeses of the corporation of the falt-springs of Droitwich.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Fourteen.

RETURNING

RETURNING OFFICERS.

The bailiffs.

PATRONS.

Lord Foley and Sir Edward Winnington.

EVESHAM.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS borough, which was incorporated by a charter granted by King James I. is only under partial influence. The corporation have been always much attached to the family of the Rushouts, of Northwick, in this neighbourhood, whose interest has been considered as the prevailing one, and sufficient to procure a seat in parliament for one of that family. The other seat is open.

At the last election, in 1790, there were three candidates; viz. Sir John Rushout, in his own interest; Thomas Thomson, esq. in that of Opposition;

tion; Mr. Sullivan, in that of Administration; when the numbers, on the close of the poll, were,

For Sir John Rushout, bart.	—	418
Thomas Thompson, esq.	—	407
Mr. Sullivan	—	374

ANCIENT STATE.

Evesham, commonly called Esham, which, we are told by the monkish writers, received its name from one Efves, swineherd to Egwin, bishop of Worcester, is an ancient borough, and enjoys many privileges; some by prescription, and others by charters. It has two parish-churches; and at Bengworth, a village on the other side of the Avon, but included within the jurisdiction of this town, there is another.

This borough having sent 23 Edward I. ceased returning till James I. who restored it in the first year of his reign, incorporated it, and made it a mayor town.

CORPORATION

Consists of a mayor, recorder, seven aldermen, and twelve capital burgessees.

The mayor and four of the aldermen are justices of the peace, and of oyer, terminer, and gaol delivery, for all offences committed within the jurisdiction of the borough, high' treason excepted.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1669, Sept. 22. Is in the common burgesses.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About eight hundred.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

PATRON.

Sir John Rushout, partially.

BEWDLEY.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE right of election in this borough is confined to the corporation only; consisting of a bailiff, recorder, and twelve burgesses; which
right,

right; if it may be so distinguished, it received by a charter from King James I. It returns to parliament; in common with Abingdon, Monmouth, Higham Ferrers, and Banbury; but one member. The influence which prevails here, is that of Lord Westcote; whose son, the Hon. George Fulke Lyttelton, is the present representative.

ANCIENT STATE.

Bewdley, or Beawley, anciently called Beaulicu; which signifies a beautiful place, being pleasantly situated on the declivity of a hill, near the Severn, had great privileges granted it by Edward IV. both by sea and land, which were enlarged by Henry VII. and confirmed by Henry VIII.

This place was originally incorporated by King James I. and governed by a bailiff and burgeses; but the corporation was obliged to surrender their charter in the reign of King Charles II. and; in that of James II. they were forced, by the violence of the times, to accept of another.

In 1707, on a trial at law, the surrender in the reign of Charles II. was judged void; and a new

YORKSHIRE.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS county is the first in the kingdom, in territory, population, and opulence; the number of freeholders being upwards of sixteen thousand; and its share in the representation, agreeable to the ratio of its taxes, would be forty-six out of five hundred and fifty-eight, which at present constitute the representative body of the nation: yet the boroughs of Midhurst and Old Sarum, neither of which have a house remaining in it, and those of Gatton and Castle Rising, where there are no more constituents than members, singly possess an equal share in the democratic branch of the legislature, with this extensive and populous county.

If this will not convince the most prejudiced minds of the necessity of a reform, neither argument nor eloquence can be used to any purpose.

This

This county has the honour to give a seat in parliament to William Wilberforce, esq. whose extensive abilities, so laudably exercised in the cause of humanity, have rendered his name sacred in the present times, and will transmit it to posterity, to be preserved by it as a pledge of a peculiar excellence. The abolition of the slave-trade was an object in which his benevolent mind was continually employed; nor did he forget that the negroes were men, although of a colour different from himself, and therefore entitled to the natural freedom and privileges of man. His labours will now be amply rewarded by the blessings which they have procured to this unfortunate and hitherto ill-fated people.

ANCIENT STATE.

This county, which was called by the Saxons Eboriascyre, is the largest county in England, and is bounded, on the north, by the German Ocean, and the bishopric of Durham; on the east, by the German Ocean; on the south, by Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, and a small part of Cheshire; and on the west, by Lancashire

and Westmoreland; extending in length one hundred and fourteen miles, in breadth eighty, and three hundred and sixty miles in circumference.

In the time of the Romans it was inhabited by the Brigantes. Whence this name was derived, authors are not agreed; but, according to the French, it signifies boisterous, resolute men.

When the Saxons were settled in this part of the island, and the whole was divided into seven kingdoms, this county formed a part of Northumberland, which was divided into Deira and Bernicia. Yorkshire was under the government of the king of Deira, who, after a succession of six kings of Bernicia, in the space of twenty-seven years, became master of the whole; after which it continued a part of the kingdom of Northumberland, till Egbert, king of the West Saxons, subdued the other six, and rendered all England subject to his power.

This county bore a considerable part in the principal transactions of the following reigns, particularly in the disputes between the houses of

York and Lancaster. In the reign of Edward IV. there was a rebellion in Yorkshire, fomented by the Earl of Warwick, and the Duke of Clarence, the king's brother, occasioned by a dispute relating to an old hospital in York.

After Henry VIII. had established his supremacy, and an act of parliament had passed, allowing the Lord's prayer, Creed, and Ten Commandments, to be read in English in the churches, a formidable rebellion was raised in this county, where the people assembled to the number of forty thousand, provided with horses, arms, and artillery, in order to defend what they termed the faith of Christ, calling their march the holy and blessed pilgrimage. The Earl of Shrewsbury, being in these parts, immediately assembled an army, and was soon joined by the Duke of Norfolk, lord-lieutenant of the county, and others of the nobility, who had a great army under their command, and were ordered to attack the rebels. They were encamped near Doncaster, where terms of accommodation were offered them, to which they refusing to listen, a pitched battle was agreed upon; but happily the river Don being swelled by the rain that fell in the night, they were

were prevented coming to an enagement; and, by the mediation of some of the nobility, a pardon was obtained, which most of the rebels accepted, and returned home.

This county, which consists of three ridings, subdivided into twenty-six wapentakes, is situated in the province and diocese of York, Richmond excepted, which belongs to the diocese of Chester, and contains one city, fifty-four market-towns, and five hundred and sixty-three parishes. It sends thirty members to parliament, two knights of the shire for the county, two citizens for York, and two burgesses for each of the following places; viz. Aldborough, Beverley, Borough-bridge, Heydon, Kingston upon Hull, Knaresborough, Malton, Northallerton, Pontefract, Richmond, Rippon, Scarborough and Thirsk.

The right of election for knights of the shire for this county, is in those persons whose freeholds lie within that part of the county of the city of York, commonly called the Aynsty.

YORK

YORK CITY,

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS city is independent in the exercise of its constitutional rights. Were there the same number of electors in every other city, and in the respective boroughs, we should not have the baneful effects of influence and corruption to complain of. An equalization of the country into districts, would supply at least five thousand housekeepers to elect the representatives for each place ; and why a mode so simple and practicable cannot be instantly adopted, we must confess we have not sagacity to divine.

ANCIENT STATE.

This city, which is the see of an archbishop, and a county of itself, unconnected with the Ridings, is situated on a point where the boundaries of the three Ridings meet, at the distance of two hundred miles from London. Its present name, York, is a corruption or contraction of the Saxon name, Euor-wic, and Eofor-wic, derived from the Roman name Eboracum, supposed to have
been

been given it ~~from~~ Ebraucus, a British king, who is said to ~~have been~~ its founder. That it was a Roman colony, appears from the testimony both of Ptolemy and Antoninus; and we have good evidence, that the sixth legion, called Victrix, sent into Britain by Adrian, was in garrison here.

The Emperor Severus resided a considerable time in this city; and dying here, his ashes were carried thence, in a golden urn, to Rome. Constantine Chlorus also died at York; and here his son, Constantine the Great, was declared emperor.

In 1298, Edward I. summoned a parliament to meet at York, and another was held there in the reign of Edward II. King Henry VIII. established a council or senate here, not unlike the parliaments of France, which took cognizance of all causes in the north of England, and determined them according to the laws of equity.

CORPORATION.

This was made a mayor-town by Richard I. but Richard II. changed the title into a lord-mayor,

mayor, and appointed two sheriffs; besides which, there are a recorder, twelve aldermen, twenty-four assistants, and seventy-two common-councilmen.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

In the corporation, together with the freemen of the city; which freedom is acquired by patrimony, servitude, purchase, or gift of the corporation.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

In the contested election in 1758, which was a very expensive and smartly-disputed one, and probably, therefore, very thoroughly canvassed, the number of voters was 2233. In the election of 1774, there appeared to be, for Mr. Turner, 828; for Lord John Cavendish, 807; and for Mr. Hawke, 647. Most of the last being single votes, it may be fairly concluded, that upwards of 1450 voters appeared at that election. But as Mr. Hawke gave up the poll long before it would have been concluded, great numbers of persons who were entitled to vote were not called upon; besides which, it was not thought necessary to bring in all the voters who lived at a distance: from which it may be presumed, that the number
of

of voters are not less now than in 1758; but, by those most competent to the knowledge of the fact, they are supposed to be at least a thousand more.

RETURNING OFFICERS:

The sheriffs.

HULL.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

ABOUT nine hundred of the electors are resident, fifty of whom were disqualified by Mr. Crewe's bill. The town contains nearly three thousand houses. For upwards of thirty years the candidates have paid the poorer order of voters two guineas for each vote. The number who took money was commonly two-thirds of the voters. So established is this species of corruption, that the voters regard it as a sort of birth-right. Very few of the voters are independent of the higher ranks of people in the town. The candidates have each their friends amongst the higher ranks, who canvas the town, and apply with

with great emphasis to their respective dependents ; so that several tradesmen are at a loss how to conduct themselves with safety : they are between Scylla and Charybdis ; and some have been known to put the number of their employers on the side of the two candidates, and hand about the list as their justification. Other tradesmen, having more than one voter in their families, split their votes, for the sake of peace, and the preservation of their friends in trade.

Besides the above two guineas being paid for each vote, the out-voters have been paid one guinea for expences, if resident twenty miles or under from Hull, and two guineas for above twenty miles, and under fifty ; above fifty, as could be agreed. This is to be understood, if the voter gave a single vote for one candidate : if one vote for each candidate, then half a guinea ; and one guinea from each. So soon as the candidates declare their intentions of offering themselves, and the canvas is begun, the needy voters offer themselves as assistants, or runners, as they are called ; and if one candidate refuses to accept their generous services (for which they are paid five shillings per day), they threaten to go to his
anta-

antagonist; so that three hundred and upwards of these Swiss troops have been known to be engaged *to do nothing*, at five shillings per day each, several days before the poll was taken. Messengers sent to canvas the non-resident or out-voters, promise of places, coach-hire, horse-hire, chaise-hire, treats, &c. add to the enormity of the crimes above stated. Another matter worthy of notice is, that Hull, being a town and county of itself, the freeholders and inhabitants in it, and in its district (which comprehends a quadrant of about five or six miles radius), have had no opportunity of voting at any election for the county of York, or for the corporation itself, unless privileged as burghesses.

The fifty revenue-officers are burghesses of Hull; and the government candidates have usually had about one hundred and twenty votes, by the connexions of the customs and excise, and from expectants.

Many of the voters are not householders, and many of the mariners have no fixed residence in Hull, or elsewhere. It appears, that every election exceeds the preceding one in corruption.

ANCIENT

ANCIENT STATE.

Kingston upon Hull, generally called only Hull, received the name of Kingston, or King's town, from its being founded by King Edward I. and the additional term Hull, from its situation on the river of the same name. It is said to have been first incorporated by King Henry III. but King Henry VI. made it a county of itself. The mayor had two swords given him, one by Richard III. and the other by Henry VIII. though only one is now carried before him. He had also given him a cap of maintenance, and an oar of *lignum vitæ*, being an ensign of his jurisdiction as admiral within the liberties of the Humber.

The town is encompassed by a wall and ditch, where it is not defended by the Humber, and fortified by a castle, a citadel, and blockhouse.

This town, having returned 33 Edw. I. ceased sending till 12 Edward II.

CORPORATION.

By charter of Henry VI. it consists of a mayor, sheriff, recorder, and twelve aldermen.

VOL. III.

S

RIGHT

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

In the burgesſes, which is derived, either from being born the ſon of a burgeſs, from having ſerved ſeven years apprenticeship to a burgeſs, from purchaſe, or from donation for public ſervices.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

From the copy of the laſt poll, taken in September 1780, eleven hundred and eighty burgeſſes voted, of which forty-two were cuſtom-houſe, and three were exciſe-officers, who are now diſfranchiſed.

As the former parliament had been ſuddenly diſſolved, and writs for the new parliament immediately iſſued, and as the election came on in the autumn, when many ſeamen in the merchants ſervice were not returned from their voyages, and in time of war too, when many were abroad in the ſervice of government, it may be computed that there are fourteen hundred burgeſſes of this town.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The ſheriff.

KNARES.

KNARESBOROUGH.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS borough has returned members to parliament ever since the first year of Queen Mary's reign. The right of election was then vested in eighty-four or eighty-eight burgage-houses, the owners of which were entitled to vote. The elections continued free till about the year 1719, when two gentlemen, striving against each other in canvassing, first began the practice of purchasing the burgage-houses: by these means a majority of the votes was always in the possession of some particular family. The Duke of Devonshire is now, and the family has for a long time been, in possession of all the burgage-houses, except four. When an election comes on, a number of men are sent from a distant part of the country, and a certain burgage-house conveyed to each of them, for the day: they are then told who they are to vote for, and the "*cry goes round.*" Some man is chaired as proxy for the absent member. The steward of the house is the returning-officer. There are no resident electors: the men who are sent

to vote are the Duke's tenants: they come, if there is occasion, from his estates in the East Riding; but generally they are those about Botton-bridge, near Skipton, twenty miles from Knarefborough, on the other side of the wild mountainous forest. The number of houses in Knarefborough is about five hundred. If the burgage-tenures were taken away, it is supposed there would be found three hundred or four hundred men, who pay all manner of assessments; and these are chiefly manufacturers, farmers, and shopkeepers. No diminution of votes has taken place in consequence of the act respecting revenue-officers. The principal land-owners are Sir Thomas Slingsby, Mr. Roundhill, the heirs of the late Mr. Rhodes, of Rippon, and Sir John Coghill, besides a great many tradesmen, who have small estates in the borough. The circumstance of the members never appearing at the elections, but having some old pauper chaired by way of proxy, which is said to be the constant practice, is really insulting. It cannot be said, however, that there is bribery and corruption, as the elections are managed almost without any visible expence whatever.

ANCIENT

ANCIENT STATE.

This place, which is an ancient borough by prescription, without a corporation, is situated on a rugged rock, almost surrounded by the river Nidd, and governed by a bailiff. It had anciently, at the foot of the rock, a castle, said to have been built by Serlo de Burgh, which was formerly the seat of the Efstotevils.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1690, 1691, May 17. In the burgage-holders.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About one hundred ; two thirds of which are in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire, and the remainder in Sir Thomas Turner Slingsby.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The bailiff.

PATRON.

SCARBOROUGH.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE right of election in this town is in thirty-eight individuals; a corporation consisting of two bailiffs, who are the returning-officers, and thirty-six burgesſes. The patron was the late Duke of Rutland, whoſe influence is managed, during the minority of the preſent Duke, by his uncle the Duke of Beaufort, who likewiſe holds the recorderſhip of the corporation, until his nephew comes of age.

By Mr. Crewe's bill, ten of the common-councilmen are incapacitated to vote for representatives; but as thoſe incapacitated to vote may happen to be ſeniors of the body, they may, conſequently, have a voice in the election of new common-councilmen, and therefore be inſtrumental to corruption, by bringing ſuch into their body as may be dependent upon them. It has, therefore, not ſtruck at the evil in this or any other corporation, which it was meant to remedy.

Scar-

Scarborough, which is a large country-town, may be ranked with Andover, Banbury, Tiverton, and Dartmouth; whose rights are likewise monopolized by chartered corporations.

ANCIENT STATE.

Scarborough, which is situated on a steep rock, nearly furrounded by the sea, and which gives the title of earl to the family of Saunderfon, has one of the best harbours in the kingdom, which is of such great advantage to shipping in stormy weather, that the pier is maintained at the expence of the public, by a duty on coals brought from Newcastle and Sunderland.

It was formerly defended by a castle, built by William Le Groffe, Earl of Albemarle, in the reign of King Stephen, which was afterwards rebuilt by Henry II. in a more splendid manner, with a tower, which served as a land-mark to mariners.

Among many other religious foundations which this town formerly supported, was a cell of monks, belonging to the abbot and convent of Cistercium, in France; a house of Grey friars, founded about

the year 1240; a house of Black friars, founded before 1285; and a house of Carmelites, said to have been founded by Edward II.

This town, which is a very ancient borough, sent to parliament 23 Edw. I. being (York and Hull excepted) the only place in this very large county that constantly returned before the reign of Edw. VI.

CORPORATION.

Consists of two bailiffs and thirty-six burgesses,

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1736, April 21. Is in the common house, or common council of the said borough, consisting of two bailiffs, two coroners, four chamberlains, and thirty-six burgesses only.

Agreed to by the house.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

RETURNING OFFICERS.

The bailiffs.

PATRON.

The Duke of Rutland.

RIPPON.

RIPPON.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE right of election for this borough is vested in burgage tenures ; the greatest part of which belong to the Aislaby family. The present representative is William Laurence, esq. of Kerby Fletcham, in this county.

ANCIENT STATE.

Rippon is situated between the Ure and small stream called the Skell, where there is a venerable Gothic structure, both parochial and collegiate, with three spire steeples, originally founded during the Saxon heptarchy. In the times of popery, this church was famous for a piece of priestcraft practised in it, by which much money was obtained by the canons. In the church was a strait passage, leading into a close vaulted room, so contrived, that none could pass through it but such as were favoured. This passage was called St. Wilfrid's Needle, and was used to prove the chastity of any woman suspected of incontinence. We are told, that if she found means to satisfy the priest by a proper present, she passed through

through it, and was reputed chaste; but if the sum was not paid, she stuck in the passage.

The market-place, which is accounted one of the finest squares of the kind in England, is adorned with an obelisk, erected by John Aislable, esq. chancellor of the exchequer in the reign of George I.

This place having returned only 23 Edw. I. and 1 Edw. II. intermitted sending till the last parliament of Edw. VI. or 1 Mary, when it was restored.

CORPORATION.

By charter granted in 1604, it is governed by a mayor, recorder, twelve aldermen, and twenty-four assistants.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

In the burgage-holders.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

One hundred and forty-six; of which a great majority are in the family of the Aislable's.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

PATRON.

RICHMOND.

RICHMOND.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE influence which prevails here is that of Sir Thomas Dundas, and Mr. York ; but the former of these gentlemen holds a complete majority of votes, the latter possessing only thirty borough-houses. Some of the aldermen, and independant freeholders, also have votes, which they may give according to their inclinations ; but these are an inconsiderable number.

ANCIENT STATE.

Richmond, which is said to be so called, from a small variation of Rich Mount, is inclosed with walls, in which are three gates, leading to three suburbs, and had formerly a castle built by Allan of Bretagne, who was created, by William the Conqueror, the first earl of Richmond ; which title, with that of duke, has been conferred on the branches of several royal families, but now centers in his Grace Charles Lenox, Duke of Richmond and Lenox.

This

This borough, having been incorporated 19 Eliz. was, in her next parliament, anno 27, called upon to return members. It has been annexed to the duchy of Lancaster ever since the reign of Richard II. and has thirteen free companies of tradesmen, who annually choofe the mayor on Hilary-day.

CORPORATION

Consists of a mayor, recorder, twelve aldermen, and twenty-four common-councilmen.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1727, March 9. Is in such persons as are owners of ancient burgages in the said borough, having a right of pasture in a common field, called Whitecliffe Pasture.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Two hundred and seventy, of which Sir Thomas Dundas possesses a complete majority.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

PATRON.

Sir Thomas Dundas,

HEYDON.

HEYDON.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

IN this borough every burges, with the exception of a few indeed, thinks it incumbent on him to lay the candidates under as severe a contribution as possible. Ribband-bills will amount to 100l. The candidates' agents will lend the burgeses money, which is never returned. The families of several burgeses have almost lived by their exactions, and yet their idleness has ruined them. Voters have been known to ask 100l. and 80l. has been bid for a single vote. The nominal price of a vote is 20l. that is, 20l. is expected by each voter, in case there is no opposition. Where such enormities prevail, inferior vices will necessarily flourish.

ANCIENT STATE.

This borough, which is about four miles distant from Hull, is situated on a small stream near the Humber: it had formerly three churches, of which

which only one now remains. It sent members to parliament anno 23 Edw. I. after which it ceased sending till 1 Edw. VI.

CORPORATION

Consists of a mayor, recorder, two bailiffs and nine aldermen.

RIGHT OF ELECTION

Is in the burgesses of the said borough, whose privileges are gained either by descent, by serving seven years to a freeman residing only in the borough, or by an honorary gift, at the discretion of the chief officers for the time being; which latter power is seldom exercised, on account of the jealousy and opposition of the common burgesses.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Was, in 1775, about one hundred and seventy-five; deducting from which about thirty revenue-officers, who are now disfranchised, the number will hardly exceed one hundred and forty.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

PATRON.

BOROUGH.

BOROUGHBRIDGE.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE right of election here is not, like that of the other part of the parish, in the inhabitants paying scot and lot, but in burgage-holds. These tenures, like the houses in Aldborough, are the property of the Duke of Newcastle, and Andrew Wilkinfon, esq. but the former possessing the majority of them, has consequently the disposal of its representation.

The returning officer here, as at Aldborough, is a titular bailiff, appointed at the court-leet of the lord of the manor.

ANCIENT STATE.

Boroughbridge, or Burrowbridge, which is so called from a handsome stone bridge over the river Ure, is a small borough, at the distance of two hundred and seventeen miles from London, and only a chapelry to Aldborough, where they bury their dead; notwithstanding which, it sends

two members to parliament, and is governed by a titular bailiff. Near this place Edward II. is said to have gained a victory over the barons.

This borough never sent to parliament till 1553, being the first year of Queen Mary's reign.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

In the burgage-holders.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Nominally, seventy-four.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The bailiff.

PATRON.

The Duke of Newcastle.

MALTON.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS town has no corporation. The returning officer is a titular bailiff, appointed at the court-leet

leet of Earl Fitzwilliam, lord of the manor. There is no resolution respecting the right of election, but it is exercised by the burgage-holders, in number about a hundred; these are mostly the property of Earl Fitzwilliam, who has the sole disposal of its political favours.

ANCIENT STATE.

Malton, or New Malton, which is a borough by prescription, has had the epithet New ever since the reign of King Stephen, when it was rebuilt by Eustace Fitz John; and is divided by the river Derwent into the old and new towns, having a communication with each other by a bridge. In the reign of Henry I. it had a castle, of which some remains are still to be seen.

Though this is a large town, and has three churches, yet they are only reputed as chapels of ease to Old Malton. It is governed by a titular bailiff, and has no corporation.

This place having returned to parliament 23 and 26 Edw. I. was restored to send members again to parliament, by order of the house of commons, anno 1640.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

In the burgage-holders.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About three hundred and forty.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The bailiff.

PATRON.

Earl Fitzwilliam.

THIRSK.**POLITICAL CHARACTER.**

THIS town is divided into two parts, the old and new town. The new town has a market, is well built, full of inhabitants, and improving. The burgage-tenure in which the right of election is vested, is in old Thirsk, now much depopulated: the owners of fifty of the burgage houses have, however, the privilege of electing two members, forty-

forty-nine of which really belong to Sir Thomas Frankland, though they are occasionally conveyed to several of his friends and dependants for the purpose of voting only, as he receives the rents and profits.

ANCIENT STATE.

Thirsk, or Thrusk, which is an ancient borough by prescription, had a very strong castle formerly, which was destroyed by Henry II. It is governed by a bailiff, who is chosen by the burgage-holders, and sworn in by the steward of the lord of the manor, for whom he holds a court-leet twice a year.

This place having sent only 23 Edw. I. made no other return till the last parliament of Edw. VI. when the sheriff of Yorkshire summoned Heydon and this borough to send members.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

In the burgage-holders of the village of Old Thirsk.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Fifty.

T 2

RETURNING

RETURNING OFFICER.

The bailiff.

PATRON.

Sir Thomas Frankland.

ALDBOROUGH.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS parish, which does not contain one hundred and forty houses, sends *four members* to parliament, under the names of the boroughs of Aldborough and Boroughbridge. They do not, like Steyning and Bramber, in Suffex, consist of one paltry street, or, like Weymouth and Melcombe, in Dorsetshire, unite in choosing four members, but are separate and distinct boroughs, without arms or corporations, and almost destitute of every thing else but representatives. A bailiff, appointed at the court-leet of the lord of the manor, is the returning officer, and the right of election is in sixty-four housekeepers, paying
scot

scot and lot; these houses are all the property of the Duke of Newcastle, and Andrew Wilkinson, esq. but as the latter has only a minority, the election interest is wholly in the Duke of Newcastle.

ANCIENT STATE.

This place, which is the *Ifurium Brigantum* of the Romans, is situated on the south bank of the river Ure, and with Boroughbridge forms only one parish; of which it is worthy remark, that this is the only instance of a single parish returning four members. They are nevertheless chosen distinctly; viz. both here and at Boroughbridge, which was anciently known by the name of the New Borough, as this continues the appellation of the Old Borough.

This village never sent members to parliament till the last year of Philip and Mary, 1558.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1679, 15 May. In all the inhabitants paying scot and lot only.

1690, 17 May. Is not only in the select number of burgessees, holding by burgage-tenure in the said borough, but in all the inhabitants paying scot and lot.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Nominally sixty-four.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The lord's bailiff.

PATRON.

The Duke of Newcastle.

BEVERLEY.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

ABOUT two hundred of these voters are under what is called the bar-interest, and generally abide by the interest of Mr. Anderson Pelham. The ill effects of canvassing are growing conspicuous. It has been said, that some of the burgessees take half a guinea or a guinea of the candidates.

didates. In the years 1774 and 1780, three or four hundred of the burgesſes were exceedingly eager for an oppoſition, without attending to the political opinions of the candidates, which ſeems to indicate ſomething very vague and unſubſtantial in their ideas of freedom. They were afraid, it ſeems, that if the bar-intereſt, or Mr. Pelham's, was not oppoſed, the loaves and fiſhes, if not the liquor they ſwam in, might eſcape from their poſſeſſion.

ANCIENT STATE.

Beverley is an ancient borough, governed under a charter of Queen Elizabeth, by a corporation, whoſe jurifdiction is ſaid to extend over a hundred neighbouring villages, beſides ſeveral others, in a large diſtrict, called Holdernefs, between the Humber and the ſea.

The ſeſſions for the Eaſt Riding are always held here ; and here a court of record, called the Provost's court, is kept, in which all cauſes may be tried, ariſing within the liberties of the town, except titles to land. This corporation is alſo ſaid to have a power in criminal matters, though it is not at preſent exerted : and here is an

office, for the public registering of all wills and deeds, which affect any lands in the East Riding.

This place, having sent to all the parliaments of Edward I. made no other return (notwithstanding it received three summonses in the reign of Edward II.) till the 5th of Queen Elizabeth, who incorporated it anno 1573, by the name of a mayor, governors, and burgeses.

CORPORATION.

Consists of a mayor, recorder, twelve governors, or superior burgeses, and thirteen inferior ones.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

Is in the freemen of the town, who acquire this right by birth, servitude, or purchase. First, a freeman's son, if born within the liberties of the town of Beverley, but not otherwise, is intitled to his freedom, when of the age of twenty-one years. 2dly, An apprentice, for seven years, to a freeman residing within the liberties of the town of Beverley, but not otherwise, upon the expiration of that term, is admitted to his

his freedom, on paying a fine of forty-eight shillings. 3dly, Several persons are admitted to their freedom by purchase; and there is a standing order, that a day-labourer shall not be made free for a less sum than thirty guineas; and that every other person shall pay proportionally, according to his circumstances, trade, or occupation, at the discretion of the body corporate; and a candidate to represent the borough, if not already free, may purchase his freedom for fifty pounds, or guineas.

N. B. The body corporate have refused to admit to his freedom a capital tradesman in that town, although he offered them fifty pounds for the purchase of it; neither would they fix any other sum.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About one thousand.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

NORTH-

NORTHALLERTON.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE right of voting is annexed to the scite of the greater part of the houses adjoining to, and fronting the street; few or none of the back tenements are considered as part of the burgage-tenures, or consequently entitled to votes. Some of those tenures now subsist in the form of stables, or cow-houses, in which the appearance of one or more chimnies is usually preserved, as a memorial of their right; others are let out to poor persons, at a small annual rent, on the condition of their keeping them in repair; and many are totally ruinous and uninhabited. The vote is in some instances separated from the house, by the practice of granting a lease of the latter for the term of nine hundred and ninety-nine years, subject to an annual pepper-corn rent; in either case, of the vote being reserved or sold with the house, it is considered as one hundred pounds in the

the purchase. We are informed, that the right of voting in the borough has been invariably annexed to the ancient and established burgage-tenures, and never, as in some others, enlarged to the householders in general. A majority of these houses are known to be the property of Henry Pierse, esq. brother-in-law to Lord Monson, and Edward Lascelles, esq. first cousin to Lord Harewood, the present members, or their families. The number advertised to be sold some time ago, as the property of one gentleman, was thought to be fifteen. The remainder is divided singly, or in small shares, among various proprietors. Previous to an election, in case an opposition is expected, the assignments, we are informed, of the several tenures, are prepared for such persons as the respective proprietors can confide in ; but they are not executed unless called for, nor even then usually entrusted to the custody of the voters.

We are also informed, that Sir Charles Turner has ten or twelve burgage-houses ; Mr. Metcalfe and family, five ; Mr. Meek, three or four ; and the Rev. Mr. Peacock, about the same number.

ANCIENT STATE.

This place, which is so called to distinguish it from several other towns of the same name in this county, is situated on the bank of a river, called the Wiske, and encompassed by a small tract of land, called Allertonshire, consisting of only one street, about half a mile in length.

It is an ancient borough, without a corporation, governed by a bailiff, deputed and authorised by the Bishop of Durham, for the time being, by patent for life.

The bishop is lord of the manor; and the bailiff, or deputy, presides at the election of members of parliament.

This borough, having sent 26 Edw. I. intermitted, and made no other return till called upon, as Malton was, to send members, by order of the house of commons, anno 1640.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

In the burgage-holders.

NUMER

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About two hundred.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The bishop of Durham's bailiff.

PATRONS.

Henry Pierse, esq. and Edward Lascelles, esq.

POMFRET.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE right of election in this borough has been contested upon every vacancy that has happened since the passing of the Grenville act. The question has been, whether that right was in the inhabitants householders, tenants here, or in burgage-tenures, the number of which is about three hundred and twenty; one hundred and ninety belonging to Lord Viscount Galway; to Sir Rowland Wynn, bart. ninety; to Mr. Walsb, forty-two; and about one hundred to individuals.

The first investigation of these claims, was on the petition of the Right Hon. Charles James Fox, and James Hare, esq. who were candidates

on the suffrages of the inhabitants, in the general election of 1774, against Sir John Goodricke, bart. and Charles Mellish, esq. who were returned on the votes of the burgage-holders. The committee, which was appointed on the 28th of February, 1775, determined, on the 3d of March following, that the right was in the burgage-holders; and that the sitting members were duly elected.

The second contest was in 1782, when John Smyth, esq. petitioned, on the votes of the inhabitants, against Nathaniel Smith, esq. who had been returned by the burgage-holders. This committee determined, on the 11th of April, 1783, contrary to the former one, that the right was in the inhabitants.

The same point was again contested at the general election in 1784, when the Hon. William Cockayne, and John Walsh, esq. were petitioners, on the right of the burgage-holders, and John Smyth, esq. and William Southeron, esq. were sitting members, on the election of the inhabitants; when it was determined, on the 11th of June following, to be in the inhabitants, and that the sitting members were duly elected.

At

At the last general election in 1790, this point was again contested ; when John Anstruther, esq. and Charles Mellish, esq. were petitioners, on the claim of the burgage-holders ; and John Smith, esq. and William Southeron, esq. were sitting members, on the opposite interest ; when the committee determined, for the third time, that the right was in the inhabitants. An appeal from this decision has been made to the house of commons, where it now remains for a final decision.

In case the next committee should determine, with the three last, that the right is in the inhabitants, this borough will be independent of controul, unless an honourable attachment to John Smyth, esq. and Mr. Southeron, who have vindicated the rights of the people through so many expensive litigations, can come under that denomination.

CORPORATION

Consists of a mayor, recorder, and twelve aldermen, who are all in the commission of the peace.

RIGHT

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1624, May 28. There being no charter prescription for choice, the election is to be made by the inhabitants (householders) residing there.

1700, Jan. 7. *Agreed*, "That the right of
" election is in such persons as have an inheritance, or freehold of burgage-tenure,
" within the said borough."

1715, March 22. *Agreed*, "That Pontefract
" was a borough by prescription; and that
" the right of election is in persons having
" a freehold of burgage-tenure, paying a
" burgage-rent."

1770, Feb. 6. Is in persons having, within the said borough, a freehold of burgage-tenure, paying a burgage-rent.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About three hundred and thirty.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

PATRONS.

Lord Viscount Galway, Sir Rowland Wynn, bart. and Mr. Walsh.

HISTORY

OF THE

CINQUE PORTS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE name of Cinque Ports is derived from *Quinque Portuus*, five havens opposite to France, thus called by way of eminence, on account of their superior importance. Our kings have thought them worthy a peculiar regard; and, in order to secure them against invasions, have granted them a particular form of government. They are under a keeper, who has the title of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports (an officer first appointed by William the Conqueror), who has the authority of an admiral among them, and issues out writs in his own name.

THE privileges anciently annexed to these ports and their dependants, were,

I. An exemption from all taxes and tolls.

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II. A power to oblige all that lived in their jurisdiction to plead in their courts, and to punish offenders in their own bounds; as also murderers, and fugitives from justice.

III. A power to punish foreigners, as well as natives, for theft; to have a pillory, and tumbrel or cucking-stool *.

IV. A power to raise mounds or banks in any man's land against breaches of the sea.

V. To appropriate to their own use all lost goods, and wandering cattle, if not claimed within a year and a day.

VI. To have commons, and to be at liberty to cut down the trees growing upon them.

VII. To convert to their own use such goods as they found floating on the sea; those thrown

* A machine formerly used for the punishment of scolds and brawling women; as also for brewers and bakers, who transgressed the laws, and were, in such chair or stool, to be immersed in some muddy or stinking pond. What pity such a machine should be out of use in these days, when so many worthy wights daily aspire to the honour!

out

out of ships in a storm; and those driven ashore when no wreck or ship was to be seen.

VIII. To be a guild or fraternity, and to be allowed the franchises of court-leet and court-baron.

IX. A power to assemble and keep a portmote, or parliament for the Cinque-Ports; to punish all infringers of their privileges; make bye-laws, and hear all appeals from the inferior courts.

X. Their barons to have the privilege of supporting the canopy over the king's head at his coronation.

IN return for these privileges, the Cinque-Ports were required to fit out fifty-seven ships, each manned with twenty-one men and a boy, with which they were to attend the king's service, for fifteen days, at their own expence; but if the state of affairs required their assistance any longer, they were to be paid by the crown.

It is certain that the Cinque-Ports were, at a very remote period, endowed, by Royal Grant,

with divers very valuable privileges and immunities, as a compensation and remuneration for the shipping which they engaged to supply the Sovereign with, whenever he should require it of them, and for other public services which they were bound to the performance of.

As the exact time at which they were enfranchised has never been, with any certainty, discovered, they are held to enjoy all their earliest liberties and privileges, *as time out of mind, by prescription*. These were confirmed to the inhabitants of the Cinque Ports, and their members, by Magna Charta, wherein they are styled the barons of the Cinque ports; and again, by a general charter of Edward I. which, by *inspeximus*, received confirmation, and sometimes additions, from most of the kings and queens of this realm, till the time of Charles II. whose general charter is the last.

As the term baron occurs continually throughout all the charters of the Ports, it may not be improper to inform our readers, that it is of the same import as burghers or freeman. From the mode in which it is used, there is great reason
to

to think, that every inhabitant of the Ports, contributing to their common expences, and other services, was a baron, that is, a freeman. In some of the oldest boroughs in the kingdom, wherein the lands were holden in ancient demesne, every inhabitant, who paid a rent to the crown, was intitled to the elective franchise; by analogy it should seem probable, that the same rights formerly prevailed in the Ports, as to those inhabitants who were assessed to the exigencies of the public. There are many other circumstances which give great strength to this supposition, which will be hereafter touched upon.

THE representatives of the Ports in parliament are, to this day, styled barons, because they were formerly, as they still ought to be, chosen from amongst the inhabitants at large. The modern practice, however, is widely different; the nominee of the treasury is, in most of the Ports, the person who is returned, as a mere matter of course; scarcely any one of the sixteen members of the Cinque Ports having the smallest connection with, or being personally known in, the town which he represents, the only (but a very sufficient

sufficient it must be acknowledged) necessary introduction being the treasury warrant. Lord Coke informs us, that the privileged Ports were at first but three; for, at the making of Doomf-day Book, which was in the 14th year of the Conqueror, there are but three made mention of, viz. Dover, Sandwich, and Romney; it is certain that these three were enfranchised together by Edward the Confessor; and, on consideration of certain services to be performed by their shipping at sea, and for some other considerations, were exonerated from such contributions and burthens, as other towns were usually charged with.

THE Ports of Hastings and Hythe were added by the Conqueror, and endowed with equal privileges and immunities. The number being now increased to five, they were ever after called the Cinque Ports; which appellation, being clearly of Norman, and not of Saxon original, is a strong presumptive proof that they had not attained to this number before the conquest; however, this is a point that has been much controverted.

THE ancient towns of Winchelsea and Rye (as they are peculiarly called) were annexed before

fore the time of king John, and were denominated *nobiliora membra Quinque Portuum*; notwithstanding which increase, the Cinque Ports still retained their original appellation.

THESE sister towns of Rye and Winchelsea, are, in most books which treat on this subject, supposed to be members of Hastings; but this certainly is an error, and well accounted for by Jeake, in his history of the charters of the Ports, which abounds with an infinity of valuable information on this subject.

FROM the time they were first added, they have been considered and treated as original Ports, and as of equal rank and consequence.

EVERY one of the Cinque Ports and ancient towns have some of the adjacent places belonging to, and incorporated with them, and, in a degree, subject respectively to their controul and jurisdiction. They are called limbs or members, and assist their mother towns in raising the sums of money at which they are assessed for the public services, and in providing the quota of shipping.

SEAFORD,

SEAFORD, which is a member of Hastings, is the only one of these towns which has the privilege of sending representatives to parliament. In return for the very ample privileges and immunities with which the Ports were gifted, the services done by them to the nation were originally great and important; as little less than the whole naval force of the kingdom was supplied by them in the time of emergency. Although their utility to the public has long since been wholly at an end, to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for the time being, they are still of the utmost consequence, for to these towns he may look, with almost absolute certainty, for a constant supply of a band of sixteen members, in the highest state of discipline and obedience, and on whom a hint from the treasury is ever productive of the same effect, as the word of command on a troop of mercenary and hireling foldiers.

THE chief officer of the Ports, according to lord Coke's second Institute, is called the Warden, or Keeper of the Cinque Ports, who is also admiral thereof, and, among them, hath the jurisdiction

jurisdiction of the admiralty, which is wholly exempt from the admiralty of England. This warden, says that great judge, ought ever to be a man of great fidelity, wisdom, courage, and experience; for that he hath the charge of the principal gates of the kingdom; he is also a constable of Dover Castle; which post, formerly considered of so much honour and consequence, is now converted into a patent sinecure place, for life, with a salary of 4000l. a year, from the civil list annexed, which, with the old and customary fees and perquisites, renders it, *communibus annis*, equal to about 6000l. and is one of those good things, which that virtuous minister, lord North (now Guilford), secured for himself while in power, thinking himself, no doubt, well intitled to it at the hands of the public, for the services he had rendered this nation, in America, and elsewhere.

INDEPENDENT of the above sinecure, there is still appertaining to this office a very considerable and valuable patronage, though certainly inferior to what it formerly was, particularly with respect to parliamentary influence.

SUCH

SUCH was formerly the corruption, venality, and profligacy of the Cinque Ports, and such the arrogance of the lord wardens, that these officers actually assumed to themselves the power and right of nominating, as a matter of course, one of (and occasionally both) the representatives of each borough town of the Ports. This usurpation was quietly submitted to till the time of the revolution; the year after which great event, a death-wound was given to this infamous practice, by the passing an act, intituled,

An Act to declare the Right and Freedom of Election of Members to serve in Parliament for the CINQUE PORTS.

“ WHEREAS the election of members to serve in parliament ought to be free ; and whereas the late lord wardens of the Cinque Ports have pretended unto, and claimed as of right, a power of nominating and recommending to each of the said Cinque Ports, the two ancient towns, and their respective members, one person, whom they ought to elect to serve as a baron or member of parliament for such respective port, ancient town, or member, contrary to the ancient usage, right, and freedom of elections.

“ BE it therefore declared and enacted, by the king’s and queen’s most excellent majesties, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That all such nominations or recommendations were and are contrary to the laws and constitution of this realm, and for the future shall be so deemed and construed, and hereby are declared to have been, and are void, to all intents and purposes whatsoever; any pretence to the contrary notwithstanding.”

THE effect of this statute has been such as to take away from the lord warden the privilege of nominating *one* member for each town, and to vest in the treasury the power of returning *both*. The lord warden has still remaining a small parliamentary interest at Dover, where he can command about twenty-five votes, by means of places at his disposal, in and about Dover Castle, and the other forts in that neighbourhood.

It should be observed, that the lord warden is the general returning officer of all the Ports; and that all parliamentary writs are directed to him,
in

in the same manner as to sheriffs of counties; upon which he issues his precept for the election to the proper officer of each Port.

THE Cinque Ports, and such of the members as send representatives to parliament, are all incorporated; the head officer, or chief magistrate, being a mayor, except at Seaford, where he is termed the bailiff.

JEAKE says, that, by the customs of the Ports, the jurats in every corporation should be in number twelve, besides the head officer, making, as it were, a jury of justices: and, left length of time should confirm and sanction a gross and a fast increasing abuse, we wish particularly to impress, that the bench of justices in all the Ports ought, by law, and by their charters, to consist of a mayor or bailiff, and twelve jurats; particularly as at some of them (for instance, Romney and Winchelsea), it has of late years been contended, that the proper number is but six.

Two jurats and the mayor compose a quorum, for the administration of what is, locally, called justice, but which might, with much less impropriety, be styled injustice. It is the practice in

most of these towns to keep the number of magistrates as low as possible, scarcely in any instance exceeding four or five; the inducement to this is, that jurats, being of more *consequence* than ordinary freemen, expect a larger portion of the septennial produce of corruption and profligacy than ordinary freemen, and the fewer there may be to divide these *spolia opima*, the greater will be the share of each individual. It is here material to observe, that it is competent to any individual whatever, at any time, to move the court of King's Bench for a mandamus, to compel the head magistrate and jurats of any of the Ports, to complete their number of thirteen; which, whenever it is done, causes no little trouble and embarrassment; the first step taken by Mr. Barham, when, previous to the last general election, he made an attack on the treasury interest, under the management of Mr. Milward at Hastings, was to compel him to fill up the bench of magistrates, then consisting of only six, to its proper quota of thirteen. In order to effect this, sailors, smugglers, taylor, barbers, and the lowest mechanics, (but not an individual of them in any decent situation of life, and most of them not of ability to write their own names), were

were clothed with the sacred robe of magistracy.

BUT let not the reader suppose, that the jurats of the Cinque Ports have (generally speaking) the smallest portion of that *real consequence* which is derived from virtue, integrity, talents, or education, but merely that which must, of necessity, ensue to any one becoming a magistrate, and intitled to a seat on the bench of justice; though taken from among the dregs of the people, and the meanest, most illiterate, and most corrupt of mankind. But this abuse becomes very serious and alarming, when we are told, that the power of these low, corrupt, and contemptible beings, of whom we are now treating, is not merely co-extensive with, and similar to, that of ordinary justices of the peace, but reaches, in the fullest manner, to the lives, liberties, and property, of all those who have the unhappiness to live within their jurisdiction.

How dreadful must be the reflection, that if any capital offence should be committed, for instance, at Seaford, during the mayoralty of a person of the description of either of those *immaculate* jurats, that such a man should preside at
the

the tribunal, at which the person accused and suspected would be tried for his life!

THOUGH it may be peculiar to Seaford to have a presiding magistrate exactly of this description, yet, in most of the other towns, the mayors are generally equally low, illiterate, and uneducated.

LORD COKE tells us, that the jurisdiction of the Cinque Ports is general, and extends as well to personal actions, as real and mixt. That fines are levied, and recoveries suffered of lands, in the same manner as in the court of Common Pleas; that they have cognizance of all offences and crimes, with the exception of high treason, and hold quarter sessions; in fact, that the magistrates of the Ports have the same power and authority as his majesty's judges, acting by virtue of their several commissions of oyer and terminer, of the peace, and of general gaol delivery.

FROM a body of jurors of the description above given, the mayor is elected. Before the passing of the statute of the 9th of Anne, Chap. 20, which enacts, that officers, having the return of
members:

members of parliament (which the mayors have in all the Cinque Ports) shall not be chosen two years following each other, the same person was usually continued in the office of mayor for a great length of time, and sometimes in a manner for life; the agent, or manager of the concerns of the treasury, in each respective borough, was universally the person appointed to this office. That statute, however, has, in reality, been productive of no considerable effect; the only alteration ensuing from which is, that some very near relation, or mere tool and dependant of the government officer, is nominated every alternate year to fill this station.

To shew that this observation is correct, let us take a survey of one of the ports. At Seaford, Goldsmith and Chambers, brothers-in-law, were constantly alternate bailiffs till Goldsmith's death; it is now Harben and Chambers.—At Hastings, the two Milwards, father and son, have been the mayors these many years; before Milward, jun. came of age, it was Milward and Evitt, a custom-house officer, and relation of Milward's.—At Winchelsea, Martin and Lamb, uncle and nephew. At Rye, Thomas
Lamb

Lamb and Thomas Lamb, jun. father and son. At Romney, Coates and Walter, brothers by marriage. At Hythe, generally one of the Tournay family.

WITH respect to the freedom of the Ports, it seems highly probable, not only from the uniform language of all the charters, and the notes of Jeake thereupon, but also from the proceedings and the evidence adduced in the trial of mandamus, brought by Henry Moore *, against the mayor, jurats, and commonalty of Hastings, before lord Hardwicke, in 1736, that the right to, and mode of, obtaining a freedom in any one of the Ports, was originally, universally, the same, notwithstanding the very great difference which at this day prevails amongst them in this respect, occasioned either by fraud, collusion, artifice, corruption, or the opposite determinations of committees of the house of commons.

For the further information of our readers, particularly such of them as may be resident within the ports, and pay scot and lot, and thereby certainly entitled to their freedom, we here insert the custumal concerning the making

* See Appendix, vol. X. State Trials.

of freemen in the Cinque Ports and their members ; which is as follows :

THE mayors and jurats, the bailiffs and jurats, and the jurats, in every Cinque Port, and member of them, where the mayor and bailiff shall have been of common election, have a power, in the presence of the commonalty, to receive and make freemen after three different methods :

1st, By birth within the said town and port, if his father shall have been free at the time of his birth.

2dly, By a freehold tenement ; and,

3dly, By purchase, redemption, or gift.

AND it is to be observed, that no man shall enjoy the freedom of any Port, or member thereof, until he has taken the oath which ought to be taken, " that he will be, from that day until the end of his life, true and faithful to his king of England and his heirs, and that he will maintain, according to the best of his power, the statutes and liberties of the Five Ports, and particularly those of that particular Port or member thereof,

thereof, where he resides; and that he will always be obedient to the mayor and jurats, the bailiff and jurats, and to the jurats (as the case may be); and that he will be always ready to perform, bear and pay, scot and lot, if they shall appear to be ordered for the common advantage of the place; in being armed in defending themselves against the enemies of his lord the king, when he shall be commanded by the governors of the Port, or a member thereof; and that he will not hear any thing spoken to the disadvantage of the aforesaid freedom, or to the abuse of the mayor, bailiff, and jurats, or any of them, in the town where he resides, without acquainting them therewith.

So help him God."

ART. 35. "Any person intending to obtain the freedom of the Five Ports by purchase, must find four resident sureties, for his fulfilling all and singular the premises aforesaid.

ART. 36. "And if he shall be a stranger to the Ports, or an Englishman, born in parts beyond the seas, and have lived with a good character and condition in any Port or mem-

ber thereof, and afterwards shall marry in the same Port or member thereof, and desire to obtain his freedom, he may become free by purchase, as has been said above, in all the freedom of the Five Ports, with this proviso, that he cannot vote at the election of mayor, bailiff, jurat, or any other officer, nor be concerned in the councils and business of the commonalty, until he have the letter of our lord the king, acknowledging him naturalised.

ART. 37. " And the lord warden of the Cinque Ports, or his locum tenens, may, once while in that office, make one foreigner, born beyond the seas, free in every Port and member thereof, according to the form of making freemen by purchase, without any fine being paid to the commonalty, where this foreigner is resident, except the fees of office which are usual upon this occasion.

ART. 38. " And they who are, in all and singular the forms afore said, made free in any Port or member thereof, are entitled to their freedom and usages in all the other Ports.

ART.

ART. 39. " And no man shall be made free by purchase, until he has lived a year and one day in that Port or member, where he asks his freedom, &c. &c."

THIS custumal lord Hardwicke thought fit to admit as good evidence, when trying a question which related solely to Hastings; but it is evident, from the introductory clause, *Hic sequuntur consuetudines Quinque Portuum & eorum membra*, that it by no means relates to that, any more than to any other of the Ports; it respects generally and equally all the Cinque Ports and their members. We have dwelt longer on this custumal, as, if in future any question should arise as to the right of freedom, in any of the Ports, not shut up by the determination of committees of the house of commons, under the Grenville act, it may prove of the utmost importance and consequence.

AT this day, the right to the elective franchise, by virtue of a freehold, is totally at an end at every place but Dover. Freedom, as a birthright, is allowed to *all* the sons of freemen at Dover, Sandwich and Hythe; at the other

Ports the claim of the *elder son alone* is admitted to be valid; and even this has been very much narrowed of late years. At Hastings and Rye, it is pretended, that the first-born son of a free-man (strictly speaking) born within the place, has a just title, and that a second son, upon the death of the elder brother, does not succeed to his right: and further, if a man, having had a son at any time, be admitted to his freedom, that no after-born son of this man can have the claim of birthright, though the brother should chance to have died before the admission of the father. At Romney, the claim of the eldest son is admitted to be good, provided he be born within the town; at Winchelsea, the claim of the eldest of every other son has of late been wholly denied.

BUT, in order wholly to stifle such troublesome claims, it is now the practice to admit such people only to freedoms, by election or redemption, as are advanced in life; old batchelors, or those who, for some reason or other, are not likely to have children.

BUT the greatest reason, and the most necessary qualification, is poverty, which is considered

as the best security for an uniform submission to the controul and direction of the superior power.

A FREEDOM of a Cinque Port town is always considered as entitling the possessor to a provision of some sort, which is generally furnished at the expence of the nation; and, in order thereto, in every one of the Cinque Ports, as a mere matter of course, there is a very large custom-house establishment. Besides the ordinary servants and retainers to a custom-house, there are usually five or six riding-officers, a custom-house boat, among the crew of which if there be a single sailor, it is an extraordinary circumstance; but they must all of necessity be freemen; at three or four of the towns custom-house cutters are stationed, nominally to cruise against the smugglers, but really to make provision for the friends of the minister: the whole body of officers are freemen of course. As the salaries of the captains and higher officers are very considerable, they have usually, according to the profits, one, two, or three, of the lower class quartered on them, who are called Riders; which practice is very general as to all the other superior places. One very great

convenience results from this; for, although the principal is disqualified from voting by Mr. Crewe's bill, yet the Rider may give his vote as if really independent.

AT almost all the Ports, forts and batteries, have of late years been built, with no view whatever of defence, or of opposing an enemy, but solely for the purpose of furnishing three or four snug sinecure places in each Port.

THE excise and post-offices have at least their due proportion of officers in each of the Cinque Ports; but, as Mr. Crewe's bill has disqualified the actual holders of places, it has become necessary to make some small addition to the former number; this addition has principally consisted of the near relations and dependants of the former freemen.

ANOTHER common mode of binding the lower class of freemen to their good behaviour, is, by lending them small sums of money on bond, which, so long as they conduct themselves to the satisfaction of their superior, are never enforced.

IN

IN the year 1685, when Charles II. was meditating the destruction of every chartered and corporate body in the kingdom, by the king's special command, all the general charters of the Ports, and most of the private charters of each particular town, were surrendered up to Colonel Strode, the governor of Dover Castle, which were never after returned. Many of the customs of the Port towns have of late years been purposely destroyed, or put out of the way; as they would otherwise have clearly shewn (if suffered to be brought into day) that, in almost all of them, their present government is a direct violation of, and a gross and scandalous usurpation upon, their original and real constitutions; that the greater part of the inhabitants are defrauded and cheated out of their just rights; and that the privileges of the many are bartered away, to enable a corrupt and profligate junto, in each place, to prey upon the vitals of the public, and to fatten on its spoil,

OF the destruction of charters and customs we shall say more, when we treat of each place individually.

THE

THE first returns of members of parliament for the Cinque Ports (Seaford excepted, which was never originally considered as a member of any of the five, viz. Hastings, Dover, Sandwich, Hythe, and Romney), was, anno 42 Edward III. Hastings, Rye, Winchelsea, and Seaford, are in the county of Suffex; and the other four, viz. Dover, Sandwich, Hythe, and Romney, are in the county of Kent.

HAVING thus given the above very summary account of the Cinque Ports in general, we proceed to treat more particularly of the peculiar corruption and mal-practices prevailing in each place individually; but before we enter upon this history, it may not be improper to inform our readers, that the author having resided for a considerable length of time among the Suffex Ports, and having been indefatigable in his enquiries into their abuses, he is enabled, from his own personal observation, to enter more minutely into the practices of corruption in these places, than in most of the others.

H A S T I N G S.

BEFORE the passing of Mr. Crewe's bill, the appointment of the representative in parliament for this town was wholly in the Treasury; the number of voters was usually about twenty, the whole of whom had places under, or were otherwise provided for, by government. The management and conduct of this faithful, and well-disciplined corps of treasury auxiliaries, was, for a long series of years, vested in Mr. Collier, who, in this situation, acquired a very princely fortune, whereby he was enabled to provide for five co-heiresses, his daughters, in a very handsome manner. Upon his death, Mr. Edward Milward (who had married a Miss Collier) succeeded to this post of agent to the treasury, and, by way of compensation for the proper discharge of his election duties, was appointed to the very lucrative office of *Surveyor general of the riding officers*; from which post, about five years ago, he was removed by the board

board of customs, notwithstanding the whole interest and influence of the treasury was exerted to prevent his being displaced.

THAT this opposition between two such great powers may not appear strange to our readers, we think it necessary to inform them, that at this time the board of customs (owing to a change in administration) were in opposition to the lords of the treasury; most of the commissioners, having been appointed under former administrations, felt no very great affection for the present. Mr. Henry Pelham, and Mr. Papillon, however, having since been *prevailed* on to retire, the treasury have now regained the favourable opinion of that office.

THIS loss was, however, made up to Milward, by the appointment of his son to the office of deputy comptroller of excise, who, on coming of age, was made a jurat; but it was judged expedient to unite, also, in his person, in addition, the more lucrative office of town clerk; accordingly, Mr. Thatcher, the old town clerk, was turned out of his place, to make room for this young gentleman. A trial in the court of King's Bench,
between

between these two competitors for office, was the consequence; when it was determined *, that a jurat of the corporation of Hastings might be elected town clerk; but that the two offices are incompatible, and that the acceptance of the latter, though an inferior office, will vacate the former.—He has since resigned the office of town clerk, on getting his more valuable place in the excise, and is now again a jurat; these two places, it is presumed, not being incompatible.

It would be very difficult to pronounce whether, at this time, the treasury, or Mr. Milward's interest in this borough, be the superior; indeed, this point is not likely to be brought to a very speedy determination, as this gentleman invariably sides with the minister for the time being, whose appointees he returns to parliament upon very moderate terms and conditions, without making any inquiry as to their capacity, or fitness for that situation. In fact, the only indispensable requisite is, an ability and disposition to say yea and nay, according to the mandate of the minister.

* First Term Reports, Durnford and East.

At present, the whole patronage of government, in this place, is in the hands of Mr. Milward, who disposes of the various places as he imagines will be most conducive to the common interest of himself and the treasury. Since Mr. Crewe's bill, it has been necessary to keep up a certain number of freemen (just enough to go through the farce, and to perform the various ceremonies, of an election) who do not ostensibly hold any place or post under government. These, however, do not go unprovided for; they are, as of course, quartered on such of their brother freemen as are in possession of the more lucrative situations; others, rather than lose their franchises by the operation of that bill, have given up their places to their sons, and other near relations; by which measure the freeman preserves his vote, and the treasury its influence.

Whatever personal interest Mr. Milward may have at this place, apart from, and independent of, the treasury, is obtained and preserved, by lending small sums of money, on bond, to the more indigent freemen; which obligations are never meant to be enforced, so long
as

as they are, as electors, in a state of passive obedience and non-resistance; but if, at any time, they should venture to give the smallest indication of an inclination to an independence of opinion and sentiment, a payment of their debts is required, and a prison the certain consequence of the smallest delay.

IN a contested election, between colonel Beaumont and Mr. Grey, in 1689, the number of voters polled, was 67; in 1698, between Mr. Aussen and Mr. Gott, 70. In 1690, a petition of Robert Munns, Esq. was delivered to the house of commons, shewing, that the petitioner was duly elected one of the barons of this port, and ought to have been returned; but John Beaumont, Esq. governor of Dover Castle, who pretended to have a power over the several Cinque Ports, wrote several mandatory letters to the mayors, and returning officers of the Cinque Ports, requiring them not to engage their votes for any particular person, for that his majesty would recommend to them such persons as he should think convenient for them to choose; and, by several menaces and threats, procured a majority of the electors to vote for him to serve
in

in parliament for the Port of Hastings, and prevailed on the mayor to return him, though not legally elected, to the prejudice of the petitioner; which petition was referred to a committee to report upon, &c.

WE make no comment on the above, but leave the reader to form his judgment of the purity of this borough from a naked statement of facts; and we will venture to assert, since the time of this petition, that it is in no way amended; but this by way of sample. From the evidence, on the trial of the mandamus, brought by H. Moore, against the mayor and jurats of this town, it appears, that the right to the elective franchise in this place, according to its true constitution, and according to the custom then produced, is as follows:

IN 1736, a writ of mandamus was brought by Henry Moore, to require the mayor, jurats, and commonalty of the town and Port of Hastings, to admit him into the place and office of one of the freemen of that town; and the writ sets forth, that he is the eldest son of a freeman, born within the town, after the admission and swearing of
his

his father into the place and office of one of the freemen of the said town and Port; and that he has a right, in respect thereof, and also upon paying a reasonable fine, to be admitted into the place and office of one of the freemen of the said town and Port.

THE above was the matter at issue for the jury.

LORD HARDWICKE, who was then the lord chief justice of the court of king's bench, in summing up the evidence, said to the jury;

"THE point insisted on by the plaintiff's counsel, and the first thing produced, to be considered by you, is a book, in which is an ancient entry of the custom of the Five Ports and their members, the time whereof the memory of man is not to the contrary.

"THE evidence relied on for the plaintiff is this, "concerning the making of freemen, &c.
"as stated."

“ AFTER reading these entries, the counsel for the defendants objected, that this was not a particular custumal of Hastings, and therefore not so conclusive. But Hastings, in the mandamus, is said to be one of the Five Ports. “ They “ have given evidence of three different species “ of persons admitted under this right.”

“ THE first is, where persons were admitted as eldest sons of freemen, born within the borough, and after the swearing and admission of the father.

“ THE next is, where admission has been of eldest sons, born within the borough, but it does not appear, whether before or after the admission of the father. And,

“ THE third species of persons, who were admitted as the sons of freemen in general; but they have not shewn that they were born in the town, or after the father's freedom.

“ FOR the defendants, the gentlemen on the other side insist, there is no right at all to freedoms in this borough; but that all admissions de-

pend upon the will and pleasure of the mayor and jurats; that they may admit or refuse, a stranger or a son, just as they please. And they insist, that if there be such a right, that it is restrained by these two qualification, of being born in the town, and after the swearing and admission of the father.

“AND another qualification insisted on by the defendants is, that he should be resident within the borough.

“GENTLEMEN, the matter of law which will arise, if you are of opinion that there is such a custom, will be, whether the fine be a reasonable fine, as the plaintiff has laid it, or whether this is a certain fine of 6s. 8d.?

“THE first evidence that has been produced for the defendants, is an old book, in which there are entries of an old customal, and a bye-law, dated the 12th of April, 15 Elizabeth, by which it is decreed, “That if any freeman, now, “or at any time hereafter, an inhabitant of this “town, shall depart or dwell out of the town, “by the space of a year and a day, he or they,

“ so dwelling out of the town, shall lose his or
“ their freedom for ever.” I own I do not
know so extraordinary a custom any where, for
a man to have a right to be admitted a freeman
who was not resident, and yet the corporation
could disfranchise a man for non-residence.

“ BUT this bye-law will not be of much weight
one way or the other. It only shews the act of the
corporation, to disfranchise any person that goes
out of the borough.

“ THEY have also produced, for the defen-
dants, another book, in which, they say, is con-
tained the usage of Hastings, time out of mind,
and they have read out of it an entry, in old
French ; the purport of which is, “ That if a fo-
“ reigner resides in Hastings a year and a day,
“ he may come before the bailiff and jurats, and
“ be admitted to the freedom, upon taking an
“ oath.” The witnesses who read this, swore, that
there was no other evidence in the book, relat-
ing to the making of freemen.

“ THEY read this to shew, that there is no right
of freedom at all in this borough, if a stranger,
who

who has lived in the town a year and a day, may come before the bailiff and jurats, and they may admit him, upon taking an oath.

“THE next evidence the defendants have produced, is from entries of admission of the sons of freemen, without mentioning that they were either eldest or youngest sons; and they only shew, that the fact is, that other sons, as well as eldest sons, have been admitted for a fine of 6s. 8d.

“IT will be proper, therefore, for you, gentlemen, to consider,

“FIRST, If you believe, on the evidence, that there is no right in the son of any freeman to demand his freedom of the mayor and jurats, but that all depends on their pleasure; but, if you believe that there is a right in the son of a freeman, and that the mayor and jurats cannot deny him his freedom, then you will consider, whether the two qualifications, of being born in the borough, after the freedom of the father, are necessary or no?

" If you believe they are not necessary, but that, whether he be born in or out of the borough, or before or after he was made free, makes no difference; in that case you must find for the defendants.

" BUT if you believe a right in the sons of freemen, and that being born in the borough, and after the father's freedom, are essential, then you will consider the matter of resciance.

" AND, if you believe resciance not necessary, then you must find a verdict for the plaintiff.

" BUT, on the other hand, if you believe being born in the borough, and after the father's freedom, are not necessary; or, if necessary, that it is equally necessary that the persons should be resciant, then you must find a verdict for the defendants."

VERDICT for the plaintiff.

FOREMAN. " We find that the eldest son of a freeman, born within the borough after his father's freedom, has a right."

LORD

LORD HARDWICKE. "What do you find as to the commorancy?"

FOREMAN. "My lord, we find residence no necessary; and that the eldest son, born within the borough after his father's freedom, has a right, upon paying a customary fine."

LORD HARDWICKE. "What do you find the fine?"

FOREMAN. "We find the fine to be 6s. 8d. and that that is reasonable."

LORD HARDWICKE. "That point of the reasonable fine must be saved for the opinion of the court, and let the *posse* stay."

WE should here observe, that Moore was completely successful upon this occasion. It is true, that he claimed his freedom merely as an eldest son; but the same evidence by which he availed himself, went the full length of establishing the right of every other son of a freeman to his freedom.

THE verdict, given by the jury upon this occasion, came under the review of the court of king's-bench, as appears from Strange's Reports, 1070, which, after solemn argument, was confirmed by the unanimous determination and sanction of the judges.

WE wish, in a very particular manner, to draw the attention of the reader to this very important trial, as it not only clearly and satisfactorily demonstrates what was originally, and what ought still to be, the constitution of Hastings, but throws great light upon the true constitution of the rest of the Cinque Ports, notwithstanding the usurpations and corruptions which, in these latter days, prevail, more or less, in all of them.

IN the course of the Seaford contests, it became important to some of the parties to inspect this custumal; and a rule was accordingly obtained from the court of king's bench for that purpose; but lo! it was missing, and not to be found! Through fear that some future claimant of a freedom should attempt to accomplish and perfect what Moore left undone, it was thought
expedient

expedient to commit this highly important and venerable record to the flames. But, notwithstanding this destruction of it by fire, we congratulate the public, that the most material and consequential part of it has been preserved in the State Trials, by reason of the mandamus brought by Moore. Of which customal Jeake makes mention, page 35 and 123.

By the last determination of the house of commons, which took place in the year 1698, it appears, that the right of election of members of parliament for the Port of Hastings, is in the mayor, jurats, and freemen, resident, and not receiving alms. But here arises a very important question, which is, who are entitled to be freemen? Mr. Milward contends, that only the first born son of a freeman, and such as are annually nominated by the mayor; we have very little scruple to say, that if this question should ever be fairly brought before an impartial committee of the house of commons, we have no doubt but that the determination would be, that the right of freedom is according to the customal above set out.

GOVERNMENT have at this place a custom-house ; a custom-house boat, under pretence of watching the smugglers, the crew of which are all landmen, but taken from amongst the freemen ; an Ordnance fort, of no utility whatever ; and an establishment of twelve riding officers ; besides the usual retainers of the excise and of the post office.

A COMPLAINT was exhibited to the commissioners of the customs against the patrons of this borough, by the town-clerk, in 1787, for quartering freemen, at five, ten, and twenty pounds a year each, upon the revenue officers of this port ; in which complaint were specifically mentioned the names of Bevins, Hide, Meadow, Bourne, and others, who had paid such sums. A copy of this memorial is now in our hands, which we will take good care of, as it may hereafter, in common with similar proofs in our possession, be a subject of more serious enquiry.

WE must not omit to add, that it was in consequence of this complaint, that the elder Mr. Milward was deprived of, his place of surveyor-general of the riding officers by the board of customs.

A L I S T
OF THE WHOLE BODY OF ELECTORS
OF H A S T I N G S,

TAKEN the twenty-fifth day of April, 1792;
many of whom have small places in the Customs,
Excise, and Ordnance, which it is unnecessary to
specify.

M A Y O R,
Mr. Edward Milward.

DEPUTY MAYOR,
Mr. Edward Milward, Deputy Controller of
Excise, resides in London.

J U R A T S.

‡ Rev. William Hicks Coppard.
Thomas Evitt, collector of the customs.
John Stevens, officer of ditto.
John Thatcher, a superannuated officer.
John Crouch, ditto.
Thomas Crouch.
Lovell Crouch.

John

John Goldsworthy Shorter.

Walter Crouch.

William Polhill.

F R E E M E N.

‡ John Sargent.

Honourable General James Murray, Milward's
brother-in-law and friend.

Robert Meadow, sen. a superannuated boat-of-
ficer.

William Lintott.

‡ Henry Sargent.

Thomas Morfee, relation of Milward.

John Thatcher.

‡ Rev. William Coppard.

William Scrivens, tenant of Milward.

Alexander Godfrey, a prisoner in the king's
bench, at the suit of Milward.

John Weatherman.

Robert Thatcher, a riding-officer of the cus-
toms.

Joseph Edwards.

Robert Meadow, jun.

Edward Evitt, purser of the Leopard man of
war, now lying at Woolwich.

John Williams.

John Hide.

Spencer

Spencer Kent.

Joseph Diplock.

Richard Ball.

Thomas Mannington.

Nathaniel Crouch, a bomb-bailiff.

Richard Edwards, sen.

Thomas Hide.

Thomas Godley.

Robert Ball.

† Stephen Penight.

Charles Stevens Crouch.

Benjamin Boffom.

Richard Edwards, jun.

John Williams, jun.

Those with this mark †, are in opposition to Milward; but the numerous family of the Crouch's are all his immediate dependants.

ANCIENT STATE.

HASTINGS is supposed to have derived its name from one Hastings, a Danish pirate, who built a small fort on his landing here, in order to cover his men, and secure his retreat, after he had pillaged the country. It is one of the chief of the Cinque Ports, and is so ancient, that in the year 294 it had a mint. Here it was that William the Conqueror mustered

ed

ed his army, after he had burnt his ships, being determined, as some have said, to conquer or perish in the attempt; but others suppose it was done, that he might not be obliged to divide his army, which must have been the case, had he preserved his ships. This port had charters from Edward the Confessor, William I. Hen. II. Rich. I. Hen. III. Edw. I. and Char. II. but it was burnt by the French in the reign of Rich. II. after having been plundered by them.

THE harbour of Hastings, which was formerly famous, and from which the town was obliged to furnish the king with twenty ships for any naval expedition, is now a poor road for small vessels, it having been ruined by the storms which, from time to time, have been so fatal to the neighbouring ports of Rye and Winchelsea; and it still continues a very indifferent one, though great sums have been laid out in order to recover it.

CORPORATION.

By charter of queen Elizabeth, it consists of a mayor, recorder, and twelve jurats. The
cor-

corporation is exempted from toll, and has the power of holding courts of judicature in capital cases.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1698, 30th January. Is in the mayor, jurats, and freemen, resident and not receiving alms, only.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Twelve.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The Mayor.

PATRON.

The Treasury.

DOVER.

D O V E R.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS town is properly called the capital of the Cinque Ports, and stands in nearly the same situation, with respect to the others, as the chief town of a county does with those of less note ; the lord warden's court being held here, and the castle being used as the prison of all the Ports.

THE right of freedom is the same here as described in the customal of Hastings, with the addition of its extending to the husbands of freemen's daughters, as well as to the sons of freemen ; freeholders are also entitled to the elective franchise in this place ; which privilege is at this day retained here only ; at the other ports it has long since, by corrupt contrivances and practices, been stifled. The number of voters being upwards of twelve hundred, they cannot all be provided for out of sinecure places, and revenue officers, as in most of the other Ports ; nevertheless, government obtains such a degree of influence from the custom-house, packet-boats, military and naval appointments, &c. as always to nominate one of the members ; the other is usually a gentleman in opposition.

MR. TREVANION, who was first introduced to the electors of this town by the celebrated Charles Churchill, in the days of Mr. Wilkes's popularity, has continued in his situation as member for this port, in opposition to all the influence of succeeding administrations (with only one exception, which was in the year 1784), till the present time.

THIS town was formerly of infinitely more importance than at present, the castle having been considered as the key to the kingdom. In its prosperity it had twenty-one wards, each of which furnished a ship for the service of the nation, and maintained it forty days, at the expence of the inhabitants. It had likewise seven churches, though there are now only two remaining. It is still, however, a large town, and not like the decayed villages of Winchelsea and Seaford, a burlesque upon the exercise of legislative and judicial powers.

ANCIENT STATE.

DOVER, which is situated ten miles to the south-east of Deal, is supposed to derive its name from Difyrtha, which, in the British tongue, signifies a steep place, whence it was called by

the Saxons *Dofra*, and by Antoninus, in his *Itinerary*, *Dubris*. It stands in a great valley, under a range of chalky cliffs, which form a kind of bay or harbour, the only place about this coast where the water is admitted within the cliffs.

THE pier, which forms the harbour of Dover, on which king Henry VIII. expended 80,000*l.* was begun in the year 1533. The harbour, which has since been repaired and altered, till it was brought to its present state, has for its support certain customary duties on all goods exported or imported. On the summit of the cliff are the remains of a castle, said to have been begun by Julius Cæsar, and finished by Claudius, the walls of which are still standing, though most of the works are destroyed. This castle was taken by William the Conqueror in 1067; and, on its being besieged by king Stephen's queen, the governor surrendered it. In 1228, it was delivered up to Philip, earl of Flanders; but after his departure king Henry III. granted it to Hubert de Burgh, earl of Kent.

WHEN the lord warden is well with government, both the members of this town are ministerialists;

sterialists; but whenever (as at this time) that great officer chanced to be in opposition, the admiralty does not affect to control more than one of the seats, owing to the freemen being more numerous here than at the other Ports. Though the mass of government influence is enormous, this place cannot be considered as in a complete state of subjugation to ministry. We shall content ourselves, therefore, with stating a part only of the patronage of government. Here are six regular packets, besides bye-boats, the officers and crew of which are all voters; two custom-house cutters, three custom-house boats, and two small vessels, called hovelers or luggers; a custom-house, with a very numerous train of retainers; ten riding officers; the castle; and two forts. The harbour with an income of 10,000 l. a year, which from the beginning was, and still is, a mere job. An immense extent of fortification, which the master-general of the ordnance is erecting, for no other purpose than that of strengthening the hands of government,

THIS place was, by the English, as well as foreigners, called the Lock and Key of England, and was of such importance, that, when the Dau-

phir of France was assisting king John against the barons, the French king, enquiring where his son was, and being answered, at Stamford; he replied, what! has he not got Dover castle? when being answered in the negative, "Then," said he, by the arm of St. James, my son has "not one foot in England." This noble and memorable fortress, which has several times saved the kingdom from conquest or slavery, is now become the prey of the people to whom it belongs.

In time of peace, the packet-boats, passing between this town, and Calais in France, are stationed here; and here the lord warden of the Cinque Ports is sworn into his office. He can at this place command about 30 votes.

CORPORATION.

It is governed by a mayor, twelve jurats, and thirty-six common councilmen.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1623, 24 March. Is in the freemen, and free burgessees, inhabitants of Dover. Every son of a freeman, and every person marrying a freeman's daughter,

daughter, is entitled to his freedom, as is every freeholder within the jurisdiction of the corporation; besides all those who are made free by redemption, gift, or purchase. We must here observe, that this is the only one of the Ports that has preserved any traces of its true constitution. We are, however, of opinion, that by a spirited exertion, the rights of the inhabitants might still be recovered in many of the Ports.

1770, 12 March. That the *non-inhabitant* freemen, as well as the inhabitant freemen, and free burgesses of the town and port of Dover, have a voice in the election.

NUMBER OF VOTERS

According to the poll at the last general election, appears to be about twelve hundred.

RETURNING OFFICER

The Mayor.

PATRON

THE admiralty, of one feat; independent as to the other. Mr. Peter Fector has the best interest of any individual in this place, always siding with government.

SANDWICH.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS is the only Cinque Port, except Dover, which has the least claim to independence, and that arises from the extensive number of its electors. Sandwich, which has for many years been ranked as an admiralty borough, from the influence of innumerable places, and the douceurs which the voters hold under the patronage of that board, has been generally represented by two members of their nomination; but, at the last election, Sir Horace Mann, who resides in the neighbourhood, having the largest Kentish estate of any man in the county, and is so much respected for his hospitality and convivial talents, that no other person would have stood the smallest chance of success in opposition to government, became a candidate on his own interest, in opposition to Lord Parker, comptroller of the household, (who was supported by government, in conjunction with Mr. Stephens, secretary to the admiralty) was successful, as will appear by the close of the poll; the numbers being, for

Philip Stephens, Esq.	474
Sir Horace Mann	311
Lord Parker	290

THUS

THUS the independent interest succeeded, for the first time, in the election of one of their members. The other is still considered as being at the disposal of the admiralty.

THE mayor and jurats of this port, like the corporations of most cities and boroughs, have not neglected to use their utmost endeavours to obtain a monopoly of the right of election, to the exclusion of the freemen *.

AT the election of 1620, the third parliament of James I. lord Cobham, warden of the Cinque Ports, *made an order*, which he got confirmed by the *lords of the privy council*, that the *mayor and jurats only*, should make the elections of members of parliament. The freemen, or commons, were therefore debarred from giving their voices, with threats of imprisonment. Sir Robert Hatton was returned by the mayor and jurats. The commons, who intended to choose Mr. Borrowes, were intimidated by the magistrates. The house of commons, however, held the election void, and ordered a new writ, for the freemen at large to make the election.

* In Glanville's Reports, case 7th, there is much curious information as to this.

It likewise appears, that the corporation of this port have not been exempt from the charge of corruption, any more than their neighbours ; as, on the 25th of November, 1695, a petition of John Thurban, serjeant at law, was presented to the house, setting forth, that he was duly elected a baron to serve in parliament for this port ; but that Edward Brent, and John Taylor, Esqrs. had prevailed with the mayor to return them, though they were not duly chosen.

UPON the examination of evidence, the following matter came out before a committee :

RALPH GOODCHILD said, a great while before the writ came down, and he believes a month before the election, at the desire of some of Mr. Taylor's friends, he went to Mr. Taylor's house, with an account of what men they thought would engage for him ; and that Mr. Taylor said to him, and, as he believes, Mr. Paramour, Mr. Mandy, and Mr. Gregg, were by, that he had heard some people got places of profit by being parliament-men ; and that, if the town chose him, and he got any, *he would give half to the corporation, and 20l. a year to the poor, and give the corpora-*
tion

sion a treat on the day he was chosen, yearly; that Mr. Taylor bid him speak of it, and he did, accordingly, make use of it, to persuade several to vote for Mr. Taylor; that he voted so, and designed to do so before the said promise; and said, he believed he saw bills of charges of 300l. on Mr. Taylor's account, and that Mr. Cricket was Mr. Taylor's agent.

TWISDEN said, that Mr. Taylor, the day before the election, declared, Mandy being present, *if he got a place of 1000l. or 500l. a year, as he hoped he should, or whatever it was, he would give one half to the town;* and Mr. Cricket said, he would give his bond, that Mr. Taylor should expend 40l. or 50l. yearly, upon the town, and give 20l. yearly to the poor; and Turner, sitting by, said, he would drink the petitioner's health, but durst not vote for him, for if he did, they would never employ him again.

JOHN CHAPMAN said, Cricket declared, that Mr. Taylor had promised, and he (Cricket) would give his bond as before testified; and that, on account of his voting for Mr. Brent, Cricket had received forty shillings of Ricksey, which he
paid

paid in part of 7l. owing from him to the serjeant, but owned Cricket was bound with him for it; but it did not appear Mr. Brent had employed Cricket.

CRICKET and Moor said, the mayor went to several to vote for Mr. Brent; and Moor owned, that he himself had spoke to several to vote for the serjeant.

CLARK, Jenkinson, and Stone, said, that a letter was read, as from Sir Cloudesly Shovel, by which they pretended, that all the seamen who would not vote for Mr. Brent should be pressed. Ricksey and others were present, and some seamen were scared out of the town by it.

RICKSEY produced a letter which, being read, he said was only a recommendation of Mr. Brent, without any threatening or promises.

JOHN VATCHELOR said, Broderly, who voted, and made interest for Mr. Brent, offered him two half crowns to vote for Mr. Brent, and Ricksey and Fisher were by, and was threatened to be ruined, because he would not vote against the serjeant.

N. VACHELOR

N. VATCHELOR, his brother, said, he had heard his brother John declare, that Broderly had offered him no money.

HUTTON said, he had a debt of 3l. odd money owing to him from Curser; but he dying, it became dubious; and that he was offered to have it paid if he would vote for Mr. Taylor.

ANCIENT STATE.

SANDWICH, which receives its name from the Saxon word Sondwic, signifying a sandy creek, is separated only by a small channel from the isle of Thanet, and is thought to have been built out of the ruins of the ancient Rutupia.

IN the reign of Edward IV. the merchants of this town had ninety-five ships, which employed one thousand five hundred sailors, and the crown received from its customs 17,000l. a year, an immense sum in those days. King Edward the Confessor resided here a considerable time..

SANDWICH haven, which was then reckoned one of the best in England, lay near two miles east-south-east of the present.

THE members belonging to this town are, Fordwich, about six miles north-east of Canterbury; Deal, which lies to the south of Sandwich; Walmar, which lies to the south of Deal; Ramsgate and Serre, two towns in the isle of Thanet; Stonar, on the other side of the Stour, opposite to Sandwich; and Brightlingfey in Essex.

THIS port suffered much in the wars with the Danes, &c. for here king Canute, in the year 1015, inhumanly slit the noses, and cut off the hands of such of the English as were given to Swain, his father, for hostages. In 1217 it was burnt by the French; and in 1457 the French again plundered and burnt the town, and also killed the mayor and other officers.

IN the reign of Richard II. the woolstaple was removed hither from Queenborough; and in that of queen Elizabeth, some Walloons and Dutch, flying from persecution, came hither, and settled a manufactory of woollen cloth.

THERE is at this place a harbour with a large revenue, a mere job; a custom-house; custom-house cutter; two custom-house boats; a fort;
two

two castles, in the neighbourhood, officered by freemen; and ten riding officers. Any owner of a vessel or hoy, being a freeman, may have his ship taken into the service of the admiralty, upon application; at this time seven vessels are so engaged.

THIS town gives the title of earl to the family of Montague.

CORPORATION.

By a charter dated in the year 1685, it consists of a mayor, recorder, twelve jurats, and twenty-four common-councilmen.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1690, 31st Oct.—The freemen of the port of Sandwich, inhabiting within the said port, although they receive alms, have a right to vote.

Not agreed to by the house.

NUMBER OF VOTERS

About four hundred and eighty.

RETURNING OFFICER

The Mayor.

PATRON

Admiralty.

MR.

MR. STEPHENS, the secretary of the admiralty, has been returned for this port ever since he has been in place, now upwards of thirty years. The inhabitants of this place are bound to this gentleman by every tie of gratitude, as there is scarcely a single family, some part of which has not been provided for by him, in the admiralty, navy, or marines. Since the last election, the people of this town have severely felt the inconvenience of having presumed to reject Mr. Stephens's friend, lord Parker. Some have been also displaced, and no new places have been granted, but upon a promise of implicit obedience.

H Y T H E.

HYTHE.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE bailiff of this port was appointed by the archbishop of Canterbury, till the 31st year of Henry VIII. when the archbishop exchanged the manor of Saltwood, together with the bailiwick of Hythe, with the king, for estates elsewhere. After which a bailiff was appointed annually by the crown, till the reign of Eliz. who in the 17th year of her reign, granted it a particular charter of incorporation, by the name of mayor, jurats, and commonalty, under which they still continue to be governed.

THE corporation, out of whom are chosen two chamberlains and a town-clerk, with the assistance of ninety freemen, making in the whole one hundred and twenty-six, elect the two members; out of which number, only *twenty-two* are residents; the remaining hundred and four being dispersed over different parts of the country.

THE charters of this corporation, as well as those of the other Cinque Ports, were, in 1685,
by

by the arbitrary command of Charles II. surrendered up to colonel Strode, then governor of Dover castle, and were never afterwards returned; but they are supposed to be in possession of government at this moment.

THE influence of this place is not so easily managed as the insignificant corporations of Rye, Winchelsea, Hastings, Seaford, or Romney. One hundred and twenty-six electors, five-sixths of whom are not immediately under the controul or persecution of a treasury agent, cannot be trained to the word of command so easy as a dozen custom-house officers, or pensioners, upon the emoluments of the sinecures. By one artifice or other, however, government generally contrive to have both members constantly in its interest.

THE corporation of Hythe are under the absolute direction of Mr. Robert Tournay *, an attorney, who is every other year chosen mayor; and, in spite of legal incapacity, unites, with the office of chief magistrate, that of town clerk; thereby consolidating the master and servant in the same personal agency; but, as plu-

* The joint agent of the treasury and Mr. Evelyn.

realities of livings, as well as places, are sanctioned by the example of church and state, we must not suppose, that the emoluments arising from the ministerial duties of one office, can influence the judicial deportment of the other.

THE interest amongst the electors, is nearly equally divided between government and Mr. Evelyn, one of the present members. Mr. Alderman Sawbridge has indeed attempted the establishment of an independent interest; but, while the representation remains in its present debilitated form, such exertions, though they might succeed on a single occasion, can neither give permanency nor security to the freedom of election.

ANCIENT STATE.

HITHE, Hythe, or Hith, which is situated six miles to the south-west of Elham, and sixty nine south-east by east of London, had once five churches; but having several times suffered great losses, they are now reduced to one. This town, which owed its rise and prosperity to the decay of the neighbouring towns of Lyme and

West Hithe, whose harbours were choaked up with sand, having undergone the same fate, is now almost useless, and scarcely deserves the name of a port.

HERE are two hospitals, those of St. John and St. Bartholomew, both under the government of the mayor and jurats; and also a charity-school for thirty boys.

IN the reign of Henry IV. most of the inhabitants of this town were carried off by a pestilence, which was succeeded by a fire that consumed two hundred houses. Soon after which calamity, five of the ships which this town was obliged to fit out, were sunk at sea, and a hundred men drowned. The surviving inhabitants, dispirited by these calamities, resolved to leave the place; but the king encouraged them to stay, by giving them a temporary release from the service due from the town as a Cinque Port.

ON the 6th of April, 1580, an earthquake rung the bells, and damaged many houses; and in April, 1739, while some persons were waiting in the church porch for the keys, in order to ascend the

the steeple, it fell down with six bells in it, but providentially nobody was hurt.

CORPORATION.

By charter of incorporation, granted by queen Elizabeth, it consists of a mayor, twelve jurats, and twenty-four common-councilmen.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1710, 27th Jan.—Is in the mayor, jurats, common-councilmen, and freemen.

AGREED to by the house.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

One hundred and twenty-six.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The Mayor.

PATRON.

The Treasury, partially.

MR. WILLIAM DEEDES and Sir Charles Far-
naby Radcliffe, who have both considerable
interests here, are entirely at the devotion of the
minister.

NEW ROMNEY.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS place enjoys the same exclusive privileges with the other Ports ; in addition to which, it had a charter of incorporation from Edward III. by the style of the barons of the Port of New Romney; afterwards by that of jurats and commonalty; and lastly, by queen Eliz. in the fifth year of her reign, by the style of the mayor, jurats, and commonalty; at which time, by letters patent, she ratified all the privileges they had enjoyed in the reign of Edward the Confessor, or at any other time. By the *forms* of this charter, the corporation is governed at this time; but the charter was seized, by order of king Charles II. in 1685, by colonel Strode, and has never been returned since.

THE corporation should consist, according to *that* charter, of a mayor, twelve jurats, twenty-six common-councilmen, and an indefinite number of freemen; but, as the patron of this, as well as those of the other Cinque Ports and boroughs,
find

find a convenience in not supplying the vacancies as corporators fall off, eight are deemed sufficient to exercise the same constitutional powers in this borough, which is deposited with three only at Winchelsea, and with six individuals at Rye.

SIR EDWARD DEERING has, by a very simple method, possessed himself of an influence in this port, not easily to be rendered insecure. His property in the neighbourhood is tenanted out, *without lease*, at *very easy* rents, to the electors; who, feeling that gratitude, which never fails to inspire those immediately interested in the present possession of a good thing, could not be so ungenerous as to oppose the inclination of a passive landlord, in so *trifling* a concern as that of the election of a member of parliament.

ANCIENT STATE.

NEW ROMNEY, which was reckoned the last of the Cinque Ports, and was first incorporated by the name of the jurats and commonalty of that town, was in a flourishing condition in the reign of William the Conqueror; having then twelve wards, five parishes, an hospital for the sick, and a priory. It had also a good harbour on the

west side, but the terrible inundations from the sea have spoiled the haven.

THE two great meetings for all the Cinque Ports are still held here; the members belonging to which are, Old Romney, Bromehill, Orlaston, and Dungeness.

CORPORATION.

By charter of queen Elizabeth, before mentioned, it ought to be governed by a mayor, twelve jurats, and twenty-six common-councilmen *.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

Is in the mayor, jurats, and commonalty.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

EIGHT; the rest of the freemen being disfranchised by Mr. Crewe's bill.

RETURNING OFFICER.

THE Mayor; who is alternately, Mr. Coates or Mr. Walter, Sir Edward's agents.

PATRON.

SIR Edward Deering.

* See the Appendix to 10th vol. State Trials, in which are two trials containing much light on this corporation.

SIR EDWARD DEERING having been engaged in the fashionable pursuits of the present day, has found it expedient to accommodate Sir Elijah Impey, and Mr. Sullivan, both gentlemen of Indian celebrity, with the present seats.

THE number of places in the possession of Sir Edward's friends, *and their relations*, renders the return of treasury candidates an indispensable duty.

R Y E.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS is one of those places, usually, though somewhat improperly, called a Cinque Port. It was with the neighbouring town of Winchelsea, annexed as a member of the Cinque Ports generally, (but not of Hastings in particular, as is commonly, but erroneously, supposed) before the time of Henry III; in a charter of which king, these two places are denominated *nobiliora membra Quinque Portuum*.—They have enjoyed, from all antiquity, the peculiar appellation of the two ancient towns, and are possessed, in every respect, of equal franchises, immunities, and privileges, with the original Cinque Ports.

Rye was burnt by the French in the time of Richard II. and again in the 26th of Henry VI. in one of which fires it is supposed, that the old records and charters of this town perished, as none older than the 27th of this king, except some fragments, are at this day to be found.

BEFORE

BEFORE Mr. Crewe's bill, this place was, in the strictest sense of the appellation, a treasury borough, all the freemen, with scarcely an exception, being possessed of places in some revenue department. Since this bill has passed, it has become absolutely necessary to make a small addition to the usual number of freemen, in order that there may be *some* people duly qualified to go through the formal part of the *farce* of an election to return members to parliament: all which new-made freemen, who are not ostensibly holders of a place; are quartered upon, and, in a certain degree, divide the profits with, those who are in possession of the more lucrative posts.

AT this place there is a custom-house, with a very large establishment; a custom-house boat, as it is called, whose crew consists wholly of landsmen, and who are of course all freemen; and seven riding officers in the service of the customs; a cutter is likewise stationed here, under pretence of cruising against the smugglers, but in truth, by way of giving additional influence to the treasury; and here we must not omit to remark, that this vessel is actually employed,
and

and paid, by the treasury, and is immediately under its controul, though it is usually called a custom-house cutter; there is but one other vessel in the kingdom thus peculiarly circumstanced.

THIS cutter, which is named the Stag, is commanded by captain William Haddock, who alone has freemen quartered on him to the amount of 350*l.* a year. However, it is clear that his place will bear this incumbrance, as he is rapidly making a very large fortune. This gentleman, being very active and diligent in his professional pursuits, as a revenue officer, the emolument accruing to this vessel, by means of its captures from the smugglers, and of its pay from the treasury, being very large, serves as an inexhaustible fund for the quartering those freemen upon, who either have no places, and who do not think the ordinary profits of them sufficiently ample.

THIS town, being situated at a considerable distance from the sea, could not have any particular occasion for fortifications; however, it has been thought expedient, of late years, to erect
a couple

a couple of forts, which have, of course, their proper officers, gunners, and assistants; here arises another opportunity for government influence. In addition to the above, Rye has the usual excise and post office establishments, which take place in other towns.

WE must not here omit to make mention of the new harbour of Rye; for the making of which, an act was passed about fifty years since. The only real object of which statute, was the giving additional force to treasury patronage and influence. After much labour and expence, the new harbour was wholly abandoned in the year 1788; notwithstanding which circumstance, the enormous tax of two-pence per ton, on all vessels of this kingdom, as often as they pass the streights of Dover, is still continued. The mode in which the produce of this vast burthen on the commerce of the nation is now applied, is well worth the investigation of parliament: certain it is, that all the officers, artisans, and workmen (most of whom are freemen), still continue to enjoy their pensions and salaries, though their places are now become, in the strictest sense of the word, sinecures.

THE conduct and management of this enormous mass of influence, is vested in Mr. Thomas Lamb, who has been, for a long time past, agent, and first officer of the treasury in this borough; to which post he succeeded about forty years ago, on the death of his father; and, as he has constantly sided with the first lord of the treasury for the time being, he has been continued in quiet and undisturbed possession of it ever since. Indeed, upon the first passing of Mr. Crewe's bill, he, for a short time, made an attempt at setting up a private interest of his own, independent of the treasury; in consequence of which he actually returned — Dickenson, Esq. to parliament (a gentleman in the interest of lord North) with the government candidate. However, he was quickly given to understand, that the treasury were determined to have *both* the members of its own nomination, and that loss of places, &c. would be the immediate and certain consequence of disobedience. In a very short time after, he returned to his duty and allegiance, having previously stipulated, that in future he would return treasury nominees only; but, that they should make him some small *douceur* or compliment; far short, however, of the

the market price of a feat, the bulk of which is appropriated to the commander in chief*; the portion set apart for the subalterns and under-strappers of the corporation being but trifling and inconsiderable.

ANCIENT REPRESENTATION.

IN consequence of the slaughter which took place at the battle of Evesham, in the time of Henry III. this place, for that time, returned four members to parliament, as did the rest of the Cinque Ports. It is probable that the Cinque Ports were represented in the national council before that period. Ever since 42 Edward III. this place has constantly returned two members to parliament without any intermission.

ANCIENT STATE.

RYE enjoys the same privilege with the other Cinque Ports; it had formerly one of the best harbours between Portsmouth and Dover; but it was for a considerable time so choaked up with sand,

* This was never done till Mr. Crewe's bill had somewhat lessened the treasury interest; that the candidates before merely paid the expences of the election, which were about 150*l*. The present members are, Mr. Long, secretary of the treasury, and Mr. Jenkinson, son of a former secretary of the treasury.

sand, that the smallest vessel could scarce enter it; and a great part of the harbour, gained from the sea, was turned into arable land. Several acts of parliament have been passed under the idea of rendering this harbour more commodious; but, in reality, for no other purpose than that of strengthening the hands of government; upwards of 100,000*l.* having been expended on it, without making any addition to the public convenience. It is now entirely abandoned, though the toll of two-pence a ton on all shipping still continues to be levied.

RYE was anciently so considerable a port, that it furnished the fleet of Edward III. with nine ships and one hundred and fifty-six men.

CORPORATION.

UGHT to consist of a mayor and twelve jurats; at present there are only a mayor and four jurats. The office of mayor is constantly filled up by the Lambs, father and son.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1702, 9 Dec. Is only in the mayor, jurats, and freemen, inhabiting in the port of Rye, and paying scot and lot.

1710, 17 Feb. Thomas Hills, W. W. T. B. and J. Y. having been proposed to be made free, and rejected at a court of assembly, and afterwards made free in the same mayoralty, are not legal freemen of the port of Rye.

It is not necessary that the freemen of the Port of Rye should qualify themselves according to the corporation act, before they be allowed to vote in the assembly court of the said port.

It appears from the old custumal of Rye, still in existence, that the right of voting formerly belonged, of course, to every person possessed of a freehold within the corporation, and to every son of a freeman; there was, besides, a third way of obtaining the freedom of this town, viz. by redemption. But, by the contrivance and manœuvres of the agents of the treasury, this constitution has of late years been wholly changed. By a determination of the house of commons in 1702, (which is the last we find upon the subject), it appears, that the right of election for barons to serve in parliament for this port, is in the mayor, jurats, and freemen, inhabiting in the
said

said port, and paying scot and lot. - But here a great and important question suggests itself; Who are the people that are entitled to their freedom? As to this point there has been no determination.—If this should ever be put fairly in issue, the probable result would be, that the right is, at this day, as set forth in the old customal, notwithstanding the usurpation and innovations of modern days. At this time, the practice is, to admit freemen upon the following grounds only; viz. eldest sons of freemen, at the age of twenty-one are allowed to have a right; the mayor has a right to name one on coming into office; the others are to be proposed by him, in the assembly, and approved by the majority of freemen present. From the account given by Carew, of some contested election at this place, it appears, that the number of freemen was, till very lately, about 50; but at present it is found expedient to keep the number much lower, in order that the claimants to a portion of the good things produced by an election, may be as few as decency will admit. Should the eldest son of a freeman have the presumption to demand his birth-right of the corporation, if he be a poor man, it is refused him; if he chance to be in a

superior situation, he is persuaded, if possible, to be made the mayor's freeman the year ensuing; the object of which manœuvre is, to erase, if possible, all traces of a right to freedom by birth. If the son of a freeman chance at any time, either before or after his father's admission, to have a brother born before him, and by whose death he becomes the eldest, his right is (ridiculously enough) utterly denied; because, forsooth, he is not the *first born* son, which the wiseacres of this corporation insist is the meaning of the eldest son.

It is very unusual to make more than the mayor's annual freeman in the course of a year, who is, invariably, a person advanced in years, an old batchelor, or a man not likely to have progeny; by which means, the future claims of an eldest son, who perchance might not be so well disposed to submit to the doctrines of passive obedience as the father, are effectually guarded against.

POVERTY is another essential qualification to the office of baron of this port. A person in an independent situation of life, might, by possibi-

lity, object to some things which are expected at the hands of a freeman ; but the danger of being turned out of place, or of being called upon to pay the money due from him on bond, compel an indigent man to the most implicit obedience.

It is a very common custom in this, as well as the other ports, to lend small sums upon bond, which are never put in force, unless symptoms of disobedience appear in the obligor ; in which case, the penalty of the obligation is rigorously demanded ; when, if the debt be not immediately discharged, imprisonment is the certain consequence.

NUMBER of voters, SIX ; all made free since Mr. Crewe's bill ; the rest of the jurats and freemen are all disqualified by that bill.

THE present state of the electors of Rye, is as follows : viz.

J U R A T S.

MR. THOMAS LAMBE, a tally-cutter in the exchequer, a place of 400 l. a year, and curfitor of Hampshire.

Mr.

MR. THOMAS LAMBE, jun. his son, cursitor of Kent, and late a king's waiter of the customs at this place, which he has given to his son, a minor.

MR. J. LAMBE, collector of the customs.

MR. T. PRÆTOR, brother of the above, farms the estate of the corporation at a very low rent.

MR. T. PROSSITER, a riding officer.

F R E E M E N .

J. Swann,

William Pilcher,

— Cook,

John Small,

James Christmas,

Riding Officers.

Robert Butler, comptroller of customs.

William Millar, post-master, &c.

— Allen, mate of the custom-house cutter.

Wm. Millar, jun.

J. Allene,

T. Proffiter, jun.

S. Barrey,

B. Bowrne,

Wm. Trimar,

Officers and crew
of the custom-
house boat, but
all landmen.

T. Hogbean, surveyor of customs.

Mr. C. Lambe, a superannuated captain of a custom-house cutter.

N. Pollard, chamberlain &c. to the corporation.

L. Maryan, place in the stamp-office.

Joseph Giles,

John Elliat,

John Bennett,

James Buckhurst,

} Lately made freemen ;
as yet they have no
offensible places,
but are all quartered
on some of the afore-
mentioned place-
men,

RETURNING OFFICER.

The Mayor.

PATRON.

The Treasury.

We think it proper here to observe that what we have said concerning the ministerial agent in this borough, relates solely to his conduct in that capacity ; being convinced, from good authority, that in private life, this gentleman's department has been at all times truly respectable and honourable, and wholly different from that which usually results from being hackneyed in the ways and tricks of corruption. As a magistrate, both of the town and of the two counties of Kent and Sussex, his conduct has always been clear, even of the suspicion of impropriety. Both the freemen and the inhabitants (which is not a little remarkable) are contented and satisfied with the mild sway of their borough monarch.

WIN-

WINCHELSEA *.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

WERE we to set forth at length, all the instances of corruption, venality, and profligacy, that have come to our knowledge in having traced the election history of this borough, it would much exceed the space we can allot to the account of any individual place, in this work. Some of the most remarkable, however, we shall point out, and recite as much at length as our room will admit of. In the year 1623, Paul Wymond, the mayor, having been convicted of threatening and terrifying some of the voters, and of unlawfully excluding others from giving their votes, and of other corrupt and indiscreet practices, was placed on his knees at the bar of the house of commons as a delinquent, and was there severely reprimanded, and sentenced to be committed to prison, under the custody of the serjeant at arms,

* If the reader wishes to enter more particularly into the particular rottenness of this borough, we refer him to Glanville's Election Reports, Carew, and Burrow's Reports, vol. II. and Term Reports, vol. I.

for a certain time, and afterwards, to make submission on his knees, at the bar of the house of commons, and again at Winchelsea, in court, before the jurats and freemen.

IN the year 1702, Mr. Edwards, the mayor, for the same improper conduct as his predecessor, Paul Wymond, was taken into custody; was reprimanded by the speaker in the same disgraceful manner; and, in consequence of a resolution of the house of commons, was turned out of all his places in the customs, notwithstanding every effort was made by the treasury bench, whose tool and creature he was, to protect him from the vengeance of the legislature.

IN the year 1702, two petitions were presented against undue returns, on the ground of bribery. In 1711, it appeared in evidence, to a committee of the house of commons, that Sir Francis Dashwood had paid 30l. to each of those who voted for him, besides giving a douceur to all the wives and daughters of freemen.

WINCHELSEA may be considered as having been wholly a treasury borough, till the year 1754, when

when the late Arnold Nesbitt, Esq. an Irish gentleman, and till then entirely unknown in this place, was returned by the then minister, the duke of Newcastle. Mr. Nesbitt began immediately to make purchases to a considerable amount of estates within the town, and in the neighbourhood, with a view of securing to himself thereby a controul over the borough in future. In this project he succeeded so far, as to establish fully the command over *one* of the seats, and; occasionally, when he chanced to be well with the treasury, over *both*.

ABOUT the year 1762, Mr. Nesbitt, being at that time in opposition, a violent attack was made by government on this borough, under the auspices of the late earl of Egremont, who had a large estate in the neighbourhood, in order to bring it back to its former allegiance to the treasury.—This contest gave birth to the famous Winchelsea causes, set forth at length in the second volume of Burrow's Reports. The Nesbitt interest was, upon the whole, successful upon this occasion. The treasury have since made some other rude attacks on the Nesbitt interest, in which they have at times so far succeeded, as to return one member.

IN the course of these conflicts, which were of long continuance, and of course very expensive, the death of the earl of Egremont took place, and, in consequence, a temporary deficiency of cash; Mr. Wardroper, the treasury agent, who was then in the office of town-clerk, having occasion for larger sums of money to carry on the battle, than it was convenient for government to supply him with, actually pawned the charters, custumal, and all the records of the corporation, with a Mr. Wilson, an understrapper to the minister; at a convenient season, the pledge was redeemed by the treasury, where it was, till very lately, in safe keeping.

SINCE the late transfer of the borough, it is probable that the purchasers, who are entirely at the devotion of the ministry, may have possessed themselves of the instrument and documents above-mentioned, as they, eventually, may be of great consequence; though, upon the whole, if this be the case, it is highly probable, that the fate of the custumal of Hastings, (annihilation by fire) will await the charters and records of Winchelsea. We pledge ourselves for the authenticity of this anecdote.

THE

THE late Arnold Nesbitt having died indebted to the crown, to the amount of nearly 100,000 l. and otherwise much embarrassed in his circumstances (to which his expences, at this place, not a little contributed, as he had the character of being a liberal pay-master to his *virtuous* constituents), a decree for the sale of all his property was made by the court of chancery for the benefit of his creditors. Mr. J. Nesbitt, the present member for Gatton, (conscious that his consequence in this place wholly depended on the estate, which the world had hitherto supposed to have descended to him from his uncle, free from any incumbrance whatever) a very short time before the promulgation of this fatal decree in chancery, entered into treaty with the earl of Darlington, and with Mr. Barwell, the nabob, and owner of Tregony, for the sale of this borough. At first, a much larger price was required of them than they were willing to give. After many difficulties about the mode of payment and transfer, as with Mr. Nesbitt time was pressing, a bargain was struck, and the price agreed for 15,000 l. which, considering the present market price, may, upon the whole, be considered as a cheap purchase, especially as immediate possession was given.

given. Taking 5,000 l. to be the market price at the last general election, the fee of the future good-will of the borough stands the purchasers in but 2500 l. a piece.

WHERE the right of voting in a borough depends upon property, as in a scot and lot, or burgage-hold borough, it is easy to conceive that the seats in parliament may be merchantable commodities; but, as the elective franchise in this place is not connected with property, but depends upon freedom, it is probable, that in the sale above alluded to, the voters themselves, like so many beasts in a penn at Smithfield, were bartered in the transfer.

BUT what is not a little curious; it is certain that the bargain was made, and terms fully settled and agreed upon between the parties, without the consent, knowledge, or privity of any one of the voters. They, however, concluded, that their customary fee of 100 l. per man, would be paid to the electors, by either their present or former owners; in truth, this point had not been properly adjusted between them, and the freemen of Winchelsea were referred from one
6 party

party to the other, for upwards of two years, without being satisfied in their demands; at length they began to shew some serious signs of discontent, and even of revolt; insomuch, that their present owners thought it prudent to comply with their requests, and let them have the long delayed douceur, which they received at Easter last.

At the time of the sale of the borough of Winchelsea, the state of the corporation was as follows:

JURATS.

MR. THOMAS MARTIN, commander in chief.

RICHARD LAMB, his nephew; a riding officer.

MR. STACE, a riding officer, and has a farm of late Nesbitt's, now Barwell's.

FREEMEN.

BENJAMIN TREE, mace-bearer and chamberlain to the corporation.

— STEPHENS, surveyor of customs.

— MARTIN, jun. son to the commander.

— BUTLER, comptroller of customs; he, having been in opposition to Mr. Nesbitt, did not constitute a part of the sale.

SINCE

SINCE the sale, the following additions have been made to the corporation :

JURATS.

CAPTAIN COFFIN, brother-in-law to Barwell.

———— SCHOLEY.

LORD BERNARD (son of lord Darlington) and Mr. Barwell, the members.

MR. DOUCE, partner with Mr. Loyd, the attorney who managed the sale.

—— PADDY, an American refugee, living at Windsor.

PERRY COFFIN, brother to Mrs. Barwell.

A SHORT time previous to the sale, Mr. Nesbitt made a lease of all his property in this town, consisting of about 50 houses and tenements, to the present members; which, as it was without the consent of the mortgagees, and other claimants on the estate, cannot be of any validity. As it is necessary that every voter should be rated, to get possession of these houses, either by lease or purchase, was of great consequence. At the sale before the master in chancery, this town lot was knocked down to Mr. Coffin, as
agent

agent to Barwell, for 1200*l*. a Mr. Hull opened the biddings for the benefit of creditors, who was the best bidder at 3000*l*. Mr. Barwell, finding that the fate of his borough, very much more than he imagined, depended on securing this lot, made application to the chancellor for a third sale, which request (strange to relate) was complied with ; but had not this nabob been in the treasury interest, it is more than probable it would have been refused.

As this third sale has not yet taken place, we can say nothing further as to who is to be the owner of this lot—much certainly depends thereon.

ANCIENT STATE.

WINCHELSEA, which is a Saxon name, signifying a place situated in an angle almost surrounded by the sea, was built in the reign of Edward I. after an ancient town of the same name was swallowed up by the sea, in consequence of a dreadful storm. It was originally encompassed with a rampart, and afterwards with a strong wall, and was a place of such consequence, that it furnished the fleet of
Edward

Edward III. with twenty-one ships, and five hundred and ninety-six seamen. Henry VIII. for its protection, built Camber castle, at the expence of 23,000*l.* a very considerable sum in those days. This town no sooner began to flourish, than it was ravaged by the French and Spaniards; and at length, the retreat of the sea caused it to fall to decay; Winchelsea sends two members to parliament, and, together with Nottingham, gives the title of earl to the family of Finch.

CORPORATION,

WHEN complete, consists of a mayor and twelve jurats; this body seldom, in fact, exceeds four or five.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1711, 11 Feb. The freemen of the port of Winchelsea are not obliged to qualify themselves, by receiving the sacrament, according to the corporation act.

ACCORDING to the old custumal, and the true constitution of the place, every son of a freeman, and every freeholder, were entitled to their freedom;

dom; but, according to the modern constitution, the relations and nominees of Mr. Barwell; as lord Darlington, at Easter last, suffered Barwell to appoint his own dependants, merely, it is supposed, that he has disposed of his share in the borough to the nabob.

NUMBER OF VOTERS,
THREE.

MR. MARTIN is allowed two hundred pounds a year for the management of the borough, and for keeping the voters in good order, who receive one hundred pounds a man at each election.

It is supposed, that the only good voters in this place are the elder Martin and Tree; as young Martin lives in London, and the rest are placemen.

THE newly made junto are only fictitiously rated; do not reside, and, on account of divers informalities in their appointment to their freedoms, it is presumed they might be disfranchised with great ease.

RETURN.

RETURNING OFFICER,

THE Mayor.

THE fee of the mayor at an election is 200l.

PATRONS.

MR. BARWELL and the earl of Darlington; both in the interest of the treasury; wherefore the patronage of government is in their hands as to this borough.

SEAFORD.

SEAFORD.

THE influence of this Borough, or Port, has been exercised for near two centuries by the family of the late Sir William Thomas, of West Dean, near this place, whose title became extinct for want of male heirs; but his estate, together with the patronage of the borough, descended to the late Mr. Harison, of Sutton-place, and from him to the present Lancelot Harison, Esq.

THIS gentleman, at the age of fourteen, was put into possession of the lucrative sinecure of comptroller of cloth and petty customs in the port of London, which produces him a net salary of 200*l.* per annum; to this place was afterwards added that of supervisor of the riding officers, worth 150*l.* per annum, and captain of the custom-house boat, with an income of 120*l.* per annum. more; all those places Mr. Harison was allowed to hold as sinecures. Not having ever been at sea, an additional 60*l.* per annum was allowed for a deputy captain, or chief-mate

of the boat ; and as the only duty of the riding officers, in this district, was to support the interest of the patron at an election, the supervising of them did not require any great vigilance.

FROM the year 1747 to the present time, the right of election has been the subject of continual litigation. In 1670 the house determined it to be in the populacy, and in 1761 the word populacy was explained to mean inhabitants housekeepers paying scot and lot. The use made of this explanation, was to rate such of the housekeepers only as were revenue officers or dependants on the will of the patron ; the number of rateable houses within the borough was one hundred and thirty-two, though not more than twenty-four had ever been known to have been taxed, previous to Mr. Flood's successful opposition in 1786 ; out of this number *seventeen* were revenue officers, when Mr. Crewe's disqualifying bill was passed in 1782.

THE first petition which is deserving of the attention of our readers, was occasioned by the interference of the late duke of Newcastle, at the election in 1747, when the late Right Hon.
William

William Pitt, afterwards earl of Chatham and William Hay, Esq. were candidates on the ministerial interest of that day, and the earl of Middlesex, uncle to the present duke of Dorset, and the Hon. W. H. Gage, afterwards lord viscount Gage, opposed them on the opposition, or what was then termed the prince of Wales's interest. The petition set forth, that at the last election of barons to serve in this present parliament for the town and port of Seaford, in the county of Sussex, the petitioners, together with the right hon. William Pitt, Esq. and William Hay, Esq. were candidates. That on the day before the said election, a noble peer of this realm did invite to, and entertain at his house most of the voters of the said town and port; and in the room where they were assembled, spake to them one by one, and did solicit and influence them, with respect to giving their votes at the said election; by means whereof several persons who had promised to vote, and would have voted for the petitioners, were prevailed upon by the said noble peer to vote for the said Mr. Pitt, and Mr. Hay. Which proceeding the petitioners conceive is an high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the commons of

Great Britain. That on the day of election, in order to awe and influence the voters in favour of the sitting members, and deter them from voting for the petitioners, the said noble peer came into the court, accompanied by other peers of the realm; and being seated near to the returning officer, did continue there until the poll was closed; notwithstanding the presence of him, and the said other peers was objected to by one of the petitioners, and the returning officer applied to by him not to take the poll while the peers remained present in the court. In all which the said petitioners thought themselves fully justified, as they apprehended their presence obstructed the freedom of the election, and from the several declared resolutions of the house of commons, was a violation of the rights and privileges of the commons of Great Britain; and that by these and other illegal practices, the petitioners lost a great number of votes, which would otherwise have been given for the petitioners: and therefore praying the house to take the premises into consideration, and to grant the petitioners such relief as to the house shall seem meet. The house moved, That the resolution of the 16th day of this instant November,

That it is an high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the commons of Great Britain, for any lord of parliament, or any lord lieutenant of any county, to concern themselves in election of members to serve for the commons in parliament, might be read. And the same was read accordingly. A motion was made, and the question being put, That the matter of the said petition be heard at the bar of this house; upon which a debate arose. In this debate, Mr. Pitt, one of the sitting members, treated the petition with great contempt, and turned it into a mere jest.

On this occasion, Mr. Potter (son of the archbishop) spoke as follows: Mr. Speaker, I rise up to do myself justice: for as I look upon the matter contained in this petition to be of the utmost importance to the honour of the house, and even to the existence of parliament; and as, to my very great amazement, I see this question treated with the greatest contempt and ridicule by an honourable gentleman, whose weight may perhaps persuade a majority to be of his opinion, I think I owe it to myself to declare my sentiments on this great occasion by something more

than the vote which I shall give. I hope, Sir, things are not yet come to such a pass, as to make it necessary for any man to go about to prove that the constitution is destroyed, whenever the house shall lose its independency. After all the noble struggles made in the house by great patriots, after all the laws passed by the legislature to preserve that independency, I should hope, that out of decency as well as out of regard to truth, I may be allowed to argue upon that as upon an indubitable maxim. The representatives of the people, when they are chosen to that office, have been said to be independent, even on their constituents; how necessary then, Sir, is it for this house to take care that there be no other improper or corrupt dependency? But, Sir, if the ministers are to be allowed to nominate to the burghs the persons who shall be their representatives, how are we to expect an independent parliament? That ministers may endeavour to subvert this independency, that they may think it even necessary to their own security, to corrupt parliament, we have too much reason to know. But, Sir, whatever pains former ministers may have taken for this purpose, what undue methods soever they may

may have used to gain for themselves a corrupt majority in this house, I believe history is not able to produce an instance equal to the present, of a wise and great statesman taking upon himself the honourable employment of being an agent at a burgh. It was not enough to signify his commands by his underlings; it was not enough to solicit votes in his own person. The voters, it seems, could not be trusted out of his presence, and therefore they were to be attended even to the poll. But, Sir, this great humility and condescension in a minister, would, in former times, have been construed a most notorious invasion of the rights of the people, and of the privileges of this house. And, Sir, what will the people say to us? Or what will they think of our independency, if we are not as jealous of their rights, and as tenacious of our own privileges as any of our predecessors have been? What will they think, Sir, if after seeing one parliament dissolved in a new unprecedented, I had almost said an unconstitutional manner, they shall be told, that the ministers have been nominating their representatives in the next even without the ceremony of a *congé d'élire*? But, Sir, still farther; What will they think, if

they shall be told that this proceeding of the minister has been laid before the house of commons, and that the house of commons will not, or dare not censure him? There have been times, when no man was thought too great to be accountable to this house for his conduct; and I could give an instance, even in my own memory, of a great and able statesman, whose long administration was an honour and benefit to his country, and whose conduct this house thought fit to enquire into by the most severe scrutiny.—When I first heard the petition read at your table, I could hardly believe it possible that the allegations it contained were founded upon truth. I expected to have heard the friends of the noble person who is the object of it, boldly denying the charge, and calling loudly upon the accusers to justify it; I was determined not to believe it, unless supported by the strongest proof. But, Sir, how great was my amazement when I heard an honourable gentleman, [W. Pitt, Esq.] who was privy to the whole transaction, not only admitting every fact alledged to be true, but openly avowing and attempting to justify them? In what light they may appear to him, Sir, he can best tell you; but to me it seems most manifest,
that

that as the conduct complained of was the greatest injury that could be done to our privileges, the attempt to justify it is the greatest insult upon our understanding. In what other light, Sir, can it appear to us, than as the last and utmost effort of one who was determined, at any rate, to procure a majority in this house of persons attached to himself, his own creatures, the tools of his power? I wish to God, Sir, nothing may happen to-day to give the people room to suspect that he has been too successful. What more could he have done? Or what greater insult is it possible for him to offer, unless he should come even within the walls of this house to direct our determinations? After what he has done—I should not wonder, Sir, if he did come and take that chair, and tell you, as we were told formerly, that your mace was a bauble, and that you should keep it only while you please him. Your mace, Sir, is a bauble, and so is every other ensign of authority, unless you can preserve your independency. A dependance upon the crown, Sir, would in the end prove fatal to our liberties; but a dependance upon the minister, as it is infinitely more dishonourable, is infinitely more dangerous. One might

might suppose, Sir, some security to a people from the honour of a crowned head, and from the solid compacts that are made between the people and their sovereign. I know of no compacts that are or can be made between a minister and the people. I can suppose too, Sir, that in some future time a minister may arise profligate enough to carry his views so high, as to attempt to make both king and people subservient to his own ambition. I can imagine such a one, Sir, taking advantage of some general calamity, or time of general confusion, by a corrupt parliamentary influence oppressing even the king upon his throne, and making the crowned head a prisoner in his closet. I can imagine him, Sir, so blown up with folly and self-conceit, as to become a competitor even with those who shall be of royal blood, for posts of dignity or titles of honour; and he may, Sir, (it is hardly possible indeed) but he may even prostitute the name of the crown to support his pretensions. This, Sir, I say, is a picture which I can draw in my own mind of the miserable situation of this country if ever the parliament should become dependant on a minister. But as this can never happen but in some time of general infatuation, or general corruption,

ruption, the wisdom and virtue of the present age scarce secure us from seeing it otherwise than in imagination : but, Sir, whatever I see, or whatever I feel, God forbid that by an act or vote of mine, I should make the way easy for such miseries to overwhelm any future generation. The honourable gentleman was pleased to say that this was a new case, and that there was no precedent upon our journals to guide our proceedings : but let it be remembered, that this can never be the case again, since the vote of to-day will remain upon our books an eternal precedent to posterity, and a law to this house for the future. For God's sake then, Sir, let us consider a little what sort of a law we are going to make ; let us remember, that if the present transaction passes uncensured, and is declared free from guilt, we may hereafter see every peer of parliament, every secretary and other officer of state, every chancellor of the exchequer, with his treasury bags under his arm, attending and soliciting elections ; and when they shall be called upon in this house to justify their proceedings, they shall tell you, they have done nothing but what they had a right to do, and that such was the opinion of this wise, this independent,

pendent, this freely elected parliament. Sir, I am not one of those persons, who will ever be for extending the privileges of this house to any ridiculous or romantic degree: if I could but persuade myself that there was the least room to doubt upon this occasion, I should think that humanity obliged me to put the mildest construction. But really, Sir, I think the insult offered to the house is of so flagrant a nature, I think the precedent must prove so dangerous to the honour and independency of parliament, I think the consequences must be so destructive to the constitution, as to deserve and demand the severest animadversion. The honourable gentleman was pleased to ask, What is the object of the petition? Sir, I will tell him what the object is; it is the security, the freedom of parliaments, and protecting the privileges of the commons of Great Britain. Surely, Sir, from this house the commons of Great Britain have a right to expect justice. Their most valuable privileges have been trampled upon and insulted, and they come now by this petition to demand justice: Justice, Sir, they will receive, and I hope now. But of one thing I am sure, that,

that, sooner or later, they will have it. (The petition was dismissed by 247 against 96*).

THE next contest of importance was in 1761, when Sir James Peachey, Bart. and lord viscount Gage (the latter having changed his party since the last election), were supported by the duke of Newcastle, and the ministerial interest, and George Medley, Esq. and William Evelyn, Esq. opposed them. At this election the distinction of *populacy* and *tax-payers*, which has since been the subject of so much expence and litigation, first took place.

UNDER the denomination of "populacy," every man who had a legal parochial settlement, and resided within the parish, claimed, as in pot-walloping boroughs, the right of voting; and having exercised it upon all former occasions, they were deemed the legal constituent body.

A MAJORITY of the "populacy" were in the interest of Medley and Evelyn, and precluded every chance of success from their opponents or their suffrages. The subterfuge of setting up

* Alm. Deb. Com. 111. 77.

a distinct

a distinct right was, therefore, resorted to by the ministerial candidates, as the only method by which they might, with the assistance of the house of commons, found any hopes of succeeding.

THE returning officer, Mr. Chambers, father of the *immaculate* character who filled that station at the last general election, being in the ministerial interest, and the tax-payers, by a rate, fabricated for the purpose, devoted to the same party, every elector, whose name was not upon the rate, was rejected when he tendered his vote. A majority being obtained by these means for Peachy and Gage, they were returned to parliament; and Mr. Medley and Mr. Evelyn were left to seek their redress by petitioning the house.

UPON the bearing of this petition, the house of commons, who were precluded by the 2d of George II. from *altering* the right of election, contented themselves with *explaining it away*, by resolving, that by the word "populacy" in the last resolution of the house of commons, was *meant* inhabitants house-keepers paying scot and lot,
and

and that Sir James Peachy and lord viscount Gage *were duly elected.*

FROM this period, until the year 1786, the practice of taxing only the revenue officers, and four or five other individuals, who were sure to obey the word of command, prevailed, to the exclusion of all the other inhabitants. Petitions against this arbitrary exclusion were presented in 1774 by Messrs. Sayre and Chetwoode, and in 1780 by Mr. Molesworth, but were not attended with success. The committees of the house of commons not choosing to admit the rateability of men, who the Seaford magistrates in their justice had deemed ineligible.

In 1774, the right honourable Thomas Pelham, whose father, Lord Pelham, owns the tythes and about half the landed property in the borough, attempted to revive the political interest of the family, which had been neglected ever since the death of the late duke of Newcastle, and the honourable L. T. Watson became a candidate under Mr. Pelham's patronage. A Mr. Alves, who then resided in Harley-street,

had succeeded in compelling the overseers of the parish to add seven of the non-rated inhabitants to the poor rate, became a candidate upon their suffrages; and, by *good management*, brought over eight out of the remaining seventeen electors, to his interest. With this majority he must have succeeded, even against the united interests of the oppositional and ministerial parties; but as the talent of *managing* was not confined to Mr. Alves, and the attachment of this description of electors being neither to the person or principles of their candidates, the means were soon resorted to of detaching one half of Mr. Alves's confederated club from his interest, and uniting them with the *staunch friends* of government. A junction then became necessary between the remaining supporters of Mr. Alves's cause, and the interest of Mr. Pelham; but the bewitching allurements of treasury temptation was continually assailing this little party, and, by the day of election, reduced them to nearly one half of their original number.

MR. ALDERMAN CURTIS was at this time the candidate on the ministerial interest, and had obtained the promises of a majority of these virtuous

tuons electors, the whole number being at this time only *twenty-four*; and, in endeavouring to prevent any prejudice which his education in the presbyterian principles might create in the minds of his orthodox constituents, embraced the opportunity, which a saint's day presented, of attending episcopal worship; but as Satan is never so alert in his mischievous propensities, as when an opportunity presents itself of resisting the purposes of the righteous, he so managed it, as to improve this unlucky moment, of confounding all the parliamentary schemes of the convivial alderman; for, before he had finished his devotions, a new candidate was introduced, under the recommendation of the celebrated John Robinson, who had formerly represented this borough, when every elector in Mr. Curtis's interest received absolution from his first engagement, and embraced the more powerful interest of a greater favourite.

SEVERAL other candidates appeared at this election with ministerial recommendation; but lord Neville, and Sir Peter Parker, having the confidence of those in the secret, we forbear to mention the names of gentlemen, whose chagrin

must have been severely irritated, at finding themselves the dupes of ministerial intrigue and duplicity.

At the election, which came on in March, 1784, the numbers on the poll were,

For the ministerial candidates,

Lord Neville,	12
Sir Peter Parker,	12

For the opposition candidates,

Hon. L. T. Watson,	11
Thomas Alves, Esq.	11

ONE elector did not vote, who, it has since been discovered, was in the ministerial interest; but having a majority without him, he was kept back, that he might not avow his principles to the opposite party, into whose meetings he had always been admitted as a friend.

AN informality was observed in this election, which being of importance to future contests, we must not omit to mention. The 7th and 8th of William III. ch. 25. enacts, that the re-
turning

turning officer, after the receipt of the precept from the sheriff, or the proper officer authorised to issue the same, shall proceed to the election *within eight days* after receipt of the precept, giving *four days* notice thereof *.

THE bailiff of Seaford proceeded to the election on the *fourth day* after proclamation, and it being considered that the letter of the act was not complied with, only *three days* having intervened since the proclamation, a petition of two of the electors who voted for Mr. Watson was presented to the house, complaining of this irregularity; which being heard before a committee, in the month of March, 1785, It was determined that the said election *was void*.

LORD NEVILLE, who had been returned with Sir Peter Parker, had also been elected for the county of Monmouth. This circumstance made a vacancy for the borough of Seaford certain, before the event of the above petition was known; to supply which, no less than *six and twenty* can-

* This act does not include county elections. The time for making proclamation, holding county courts for election, &c. is regulated by the 25th of George III. ch. 24. s. 4.

didates offered themselves, between the time of the election, in March 1784, and the hearing of the petition, in March 1785. The number of electors being, at that time, only *twenty-four*, it could not supply a single vote to each of these gentlemen, if they had persevered in the contest to the end of the poll.

ONE of these candidates was the late right honourable Henry Flood, who was introduced to the borough by the author of this work, not with a view of obtaining his seat by the suffrages of the twenty-four existing voters, who were to a man engaged in the interest of Mr. Pelham, or that of administration, though it appeared that a decided majority of them was to be obtained, on what they called *honourable terms*, but on the right of twice that number of inhabitant housekeepers, whose names had been omitted in the poor rate for near thirty years, on purpose to preclude them from the exercise of their franchises.

AMONGST these persons, whom the overseers of the poor had placed in the legal description of paupers, by charitably disburthening them of
their

their taxes, were the vicar of the parish, and fourteen county freeholders, besides others, who could afford, and actually had, at the time, lent money to some of the parish officers, and even to one of the magistrates who allowed the rates.

THESE non-rated inhabitants commenced their claim to redress, by appealing to the quarter-sessions of the borough, on the ground of being excluded to answer election purposes: Upon hearing this appeal, it appeared not to have been lodged, at the sessions next ensuing the making of the rate, as the law directs, and the magistrates availed themselves of that pretence to dismiss it,

THE overseers took care to prevent a second appeal on this complaint, *by maintaining the poor themselves*, and making *no rate*, till the election, which was suspended for a year by the petition, then before the house of commons, was disposed of.

SIR GODFREY WEBSTER had declared himself a candidate on the interest of Mr. Pelham, for the vacancy, occasioned by lord Neville making his

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election

election for Monmouthshire ; and lord Mountmorres, in opposition, had been recommended by the treasury.

THE petition being heard, and the election declared void, in March 1785, there became two vacancies ; in consequence of which, Sir Godfrey Webster united his interest with Mr. Alves, as the honourable Mr. Watson had done at the former election ; Sir Peter Parker, and lord Mountmorres, appeared under the treasury influence, and Sir Laurence Parsons, Bart. the present member for King's County in Ireland, became a candidate on the suffrages of the non-rated house-keepers, in conjunction with Mr. Flood.

THE day preceding the election, a third treasury candidate appeared, in the person of Sir John Henderson, and exhibited similar official recommendations to those already produced by Sir Peter Parker and lord Mountmorres. The government voters, who had all engaged to support the two last, were at first a little staggered how to act under these contradictory orders ; but receiving the instructions from a proper person,

person, they dismissed lord Mountmorres, with as little ceremony as they had, upon a former occasion, done Mr. Alderman Curtis, under similar circumstances. His Lordship however did not acquiesce in this treatment with quite so much indifference and condescension; a very serious meeting had nearly taken place between him and Sir John Henderson, and which was only prevented by the intervention of friends, who suggested the propriety of an interview with a person high in office, that they might know to whom the blame was imputable.

THIS meeting actually took place in a few days after, which we since understood terminated so little to the satisfaction of the noble Viscount, that he took the first opportunity, in a dignified place in a neighbouring kingdom, to make some strong comments in his speech, on the impropriety of a minister's not paying the most scrupulous attention to the observance of his word. We do not recollect that he pledged himself "as a man, and as a minister;" but it appears that his lordship considered the obligation as equally binding.

ON the day of election, seven candidates appeared on the hustings, (if the miserable place in which the public business of the borough is transacted, may be understood by that name) but lord Mountmorres, finding himself deserted by every voter who had promised him, and by the men who had received him with cordiality, and announced him to the electors as the government candidate, in a speech of manly indignation, declined any further connection with this consistent body of electors.

AT the close of the poll, the numbers were,

For the right hon. Henry Flood	28
Sir Laurence Parsons,	24
Sir Godfrey Webster	19
Thomas Alves, Esq.	18
Sir Peter Parker,	16
Sir John Henderson,	14

THE returning officer however, thought proper to reject every vote for Flood and Parsons; eight of Sir Godfrey Webster's; seven of Mr. Alves's; two of Sir Peter Parker's; and then made a return of the treasury candidates.

AT

At this election the celebrated Mr. Harben made his first appearance in this borough, in a political character, having taken a lodging-house for forty days, to qualify himself for an occasional voter. Mr. Harison, who, for the last thirty years had been considered as the government agent and patron, was still looked up to as preserving that situation.

Four petitions were presented to parliament against the return of Sir Peter Parker, and Sir John Henderson; one, by Messrs. Flood and Parsons; a second, by certain electors in their interest; a third, by Messrs. Webster and Alves; and a fourth, by other electors who had voted for these gentlemen.

THESE petitions were tried by a committee of the house of commons, in February 1786, when, after a full investigation of the claims of those who voted for Flood and Parsons, the committee determined not to admit evidence to invalidate the resolution of 1761, by which the word populary was explained to mean inhabitant housekeepers, paying scot and lot. The counsel then endeavoured to prove, that these persons were
rateable

rateable housekeepers, within the meaning of the last resolution of 1761 ; but their appeal to the Seaford sessions not having been made within the time directed by law, the committee also resolved not to admit evidence to prove that fact.

THE petition of these gentlemen being thus disposed of, the committee proceeded upon that of Sir Godfrey Webster and Mr. Alves, who objected to three of the votes for the sitting members, amongst whom was Mr. Harben, who voted for a lodging-house, upon a pretended residence of forty days. The whole three being deemed bad, the numbers for both parties became equal. Some strong evidence of bribery was opened, which, for reasons the author is unacquainted with, was not proceeded upon. The committee, therefore, upon the equality of numbers, declared this second election void.

MR. ALVES by this time had received a complete surfeit of the Seaford contest ; and the voters in the interest of Mr. Flood, having had a second opportunity of appealing to the Seaford sessions against the poor rate, a new one being made the instant the last election was concluded ;
the

the overseers, not expecting that the petitions against it would occasion a second void election, the non-rated inhabitants were now in a situation to prove their rateability before a committee of the house of commons; when nineteen of that description being in a state of opulence much superior to the majority of the tax payers, Mr. Flood's success was placed beyond the possibility of doubt.

MR. ALVES having declined any pretensions to future support, all his little party, except one, were *prevailed on* to join the treasury junto; but a junction having been formed, between Mr. Pelham's interest and that of Mr. Flood, they became a majority of just two to one against all the forces the treasury could muster.

AT the third election, the numbers on the poll were,

For the right hon. Henry Flood,	32
Sir Godfrey Webster, Bart.	32
Sir Peter Parker, Bart.	16
Sir John Henderson, Bart.	16

THE

THE returning officer again struck off all such votes as did not appear on the poor rate, though that rate had been rejected by the committee as a corrupt one; and, admitting the whole sixteen votes for Parker and Henderson, and only half that number for Flood and Webster, made his return to parliament accordingly.

THESE proceedings were too flagrant to meet the eye of a committee of the house of commons; for, however desperate the imbecility and ignorance of a routed party of borough-mongers might make them, the character of Sir Peter Parker and Sir John Henderson were not to be sported with, to gratify the chagrin of such people. A petition of Mr. Flood and Sir Godfrey Webster was presented to the house, and, when the day of hearing arrived, the counsel for the sitting members informed the committee, that their clients, being sensible *that the petitioners had a majority of legal votes, they would give them no further trouble.* The committee reported to the house the same day, March 13, 1786, "That the right hon. Henry Flood and Sir Godfrey Webster, Bart. were duly elected, and ought to have been returned."

Thus was the cause of independence, in this little borough, triumphant over the most unprecedented oppression, and in opposition to the influence of the treasury, to a family junto of borough magistrates, or jurats, and to the united exertion of seventeen sinecure placemen, pensioned on purpose to support the cause of tyranny.

THE system of politics in this place now took an entire change; the whole of Mr. Flood's friends, together with the other inhabitants, who had taken no part in the election, were put upon the poor rates, and Mr. Harison, who had for thirty years enjoyed the confidence of government, and been the acknowledged patron of the borough, from the ill success that attended his late management, or from a determination to introduce a manager of less scruple into the dashing concerns of the party, was treated with coolness by the treasury; but as he still retained the absolute command of the corporation, which consisted of a bailiff, three jurats, and seventeen freemen, matters were not yet quite ripe for openly insulting and dismissing him.

MR.

MR. HARBEN, the present hero of these political myrmidons, had therefore time to inveigle himself into the confidence of Mr. Harison, and by an offer, apparently liberal, of undertaking to be at the expence of reinstating Mr. Harison's influence, upon being permitted to share with him in the advantages attached to it, he obtained the purchase of several acres of land within the borough, from Mr. Harison's estate, onw hich he soon erected a stately house; and, having once got an establishment within the limits of its privileges, his next advance was upon the corporation.

THIS body consisted mostly of revenue officers, whose places were all sinecures, and were originally created here, as in the other Cinque Ports, for the establishment of a government interest. Each individual owed his place to the recommendation of Mr. Harison; and it was at first apprehended, that the moral tie of gratitude might make such an impression upon the minds of some of them, as to create a difficulty in the attempt, of not only detaching them from the interest of their benefactor, but in inducing them, at the same time, to support that of his
avowed

avowed opponent; for, whenever the experiment was made, the mask of friendship must be taken off.

TREASURY mandates were however obtained, and the freemen were founded one by one. On the Michaelmas day following the late election defeat, this master-piece of political craft was to be played off.

It commenced with electing a creature of Harison's, but who was now privately in the interest of Harben, into the office of bailiff, and then the cloven foot appeared in Mr. Harben's being proposed to be elected a freeman. Mr. Harison, who was present, fired with indignation at the plot which was unfolding itself, intreated the freemen, as they valued *their own interest**, and if they felt a spark of attachment to him for the places they held, or the patronage he had ever afforded them, not to suffer this attempt to succeed against his political existence, and their security. The freemen, however, heard this harangue with stoic apathy, and, when

* The only appeal to their feelings which seemed to make any impression.

the question was put, to a man voted against their benefactor !!!

WE have been particular in our relation of these circumstances of political perfidy, in order to display the pernicious consequences; which the present system of borough representation must have upon the morals of the parties interested; not doubting but it will be an argument of much weight with the established clergy, whose zeal in the cause of virtue and good government, will exert itself with redoubled vigour, to obtain that reform in the representation of the people, which is so immediately connected with the cause of religion and morality.

MR. HARBEN having now erected a country seat in the borough, and obtained another in the corporation, felt his importance sufficiently established to commence open hostilities with Harison. The first act of his reign; for he now became the avowed and ostensible agent of government, was to procure Mr. Harison's dismissal from the sinecure places of supervisor of the riding officers, and captain of the custom-house boat, worth together 270*l. per annum*;

the

the first of which he disposed of to Thomas Chambers, the late returning officer, and the other he kept open for the most hungry of the opposite party, to bite at Mr. Harison's other sinecure, of comptroller of cloth and petty customs in the port of London; which, being a patent place for life, was out of the reach of Mr. Harben's grasp.

MR. HARBEN was not all this while negligent of his own interest, having procured the excise of the eastern part of the county to be paid into his hands, in its passage to the treasury, (an object of no little importance to a country banker), and obtained the place of receiver general of the stamp duties for Suffex, worth 600*l. per annum* for his eldest son; his next care was to procure the office of warehouse-keeper of the stamp office in London, with a salary of 200*l. per annum* for his second son, which he is allowed to hold as a sinecure, and to continue his residence at Lewes.

FROM this period to the present, this insignificant little place has exhibited the most disgusting scene of profligacy, in all its shades of deformity,

formity. Mr. Harison had the merit of managing the government influence, in its political concerns, without persecution; but from this moment scarce a sessions, assize, or term passed, without indictments for assaults, informations against pretended riots, in which the prosecutors were always sure to have been the aggressors, indictments for perjury, robbery, and every crime which malicious ingenuity could give a colourable pretence of instigating. The expence and ruin brought on individuals by these means is inconceivable, independent of the disgrace and misery that the most innocent must suffer, from the infamy of such proceedings.

IN opposition to the treasury influence, and to these measures of iniquity, Mr. James Hurdis, a gentleman of independent fortune, incorruptible integrity, and possessing a mind pregnant with the most amiable qualities, at his own private expence, not only opposed the torrent of corruption, which, like a whirlwind, was swallowing every thing in its vortex, but, with a benevolence corresponding with his superior virtues, became the advocate of the oppressed, and in the language of the inimitable Gray,

“The little tyrant of his fields withstood.”

“THE

To this village Hamden, the author, with grateful pride, acknowledges his obligations; to his humanity whole families owe their existence; to his liberality the impoverished victim of tyranny owes his rescue from the jaws of a prison; but in his praise the highest panegyrick would exhaust itself in vain, for he has a sensibility which is its own reward.

WITH Mr. Hurdis, every gentleman of the borough, except the three pensioned jurats, had the honour to act, who vainly imagined that it was possible to preserve such a handful of voters from the influence of venality; scarce a week however passed, without some one being detached from amongst the inferior part of their interest. The mode of corrupting these people was, by advancing each individual a sum of money (not less than fifty pounds) upon bond; of whom, while they continued obsequious to their dictator, neither principal nor interest was demanded; but the moment one of those unfortunate men presumed to exercise a will of his own, the bond was exacted with unexampled rigour. Another engine of undue influence is, the number

of custom-house and sinecure places, in the gift of the patron of this borough.

OUR readers will naturally be led to imagine, from the number of tide-waiters, boatmen, &c. who reside here, that there must be a harbour commodious for shipping; that the imports and exports must be great, and the revenues arising from them to government proportionable thereto; but so far is this from being the real situation of the place, that the only business done here throughout the whole year, is the discharging one solitary cargo of coals. Newhaven, which is a considerable port, where much business is done, with a third part of the number of officers, is only four miles distant from hence; a convincing proof that these vermin are suffered to feed on the earnings of the laborious part of the public, only because their influence may have some weight at the election of the treasury members. The patronage of the custom-house at Newhaven, on account of its vicinity, is added as an appendage to the treasury agent of this place.

THE revenue offices of Rotten Dean, East Dean, and the custom-house of East Bourne, are
also

also supplied with placemen from amongst the electors of this place.

MR. HARBEN being still unable, with all his influence, to ascertain a strength that would constitute a majority of the electors, had recourse to a new expedient, which was not only contrary to the charter of the borough, but to its custom, practice, and constitution; this was, to create *nineteen non-resident freemen*, which Mr. Harben and his advisers were weak enough to believe, would invest them with the rights of election. A meeting of the corporation was accordingly convened, at an ale-house in the borough, when the following persons were admitted to their freedom :

1. Hon. Charles Lenox, nephew to the duke of Richmond.

2. Robert Steele, Esq. brother to the secretary of the treasury.

3. Walker Goldsmith, brother to one of the jurats.

4. Henry Chambers, ditto.

5. Nathaniel Pain, ditto.

6. Henry Plaisted, brother in law to Harben.

7. Harry Plaisted, cousin to Harben,
8. James Harben, brother to ditto.
9. Robert Rofam.
10. Rev. William Gwynne, of Lewes.
11. Rev. Arthur Iredel, a relation of serjeant Kempe.
12. William Green, a magistrate at Lewes, and crier of the court of King's Bench.
13. Charles Gilbert.
14. Philip Mighill.
15. John Coggan.
16. James Brooke, brother in law to one of the jurats.
17. Gabriel Burrowes, father to the overseer.
18. Richard Talmage, an itinerant carpenter.
19. Richard Thatcher, brother in law to the town clerk.

Soon after which were added the following :

20. Right Hon. William Pitt!!!
21. Duke of Richmond!!!
22. John Young, a jack-ass driver.
23. William Chambers, brother to two of the jurats.

THE jurats in the above list were non-residents, and selected from different parts of the kingdom.

THE

THE resident freemen and jurats, forming a list equally curious, it may not be amiss to add them in this place.

JURATS.

1. Thomas Chambers, bailiff, supervisor of the riding officers, 150l. per annum.

2. James Chambers, brother to the former.

3. William Chambers, ditto, a patent waiter in the customs of the port of London, 150l. per annum, resides at Bletchington, and carries on the business of a farmer.

4. Thomas Harben, who resides at Lewes, has the public taxes paid into his bank, and his two eldest sons have places worth 800l. per annum.

5. Duke of Richmond, master general of the ordnance, &c. &c. &c. who never was within the borough but once.

6. Lancelot Harison, residing at Brighthelmstone, comptroller of cloth and petty customs in the port of London, 200l. per annum.

7. Robert Stone, a tenant of lord Pelham.

FREEMEN,

8. Sir James Peachey, master of the robes to the king.

9. Chatfield Turner, town clerk, who resides at Lewes, and is said to be a rider, at 100l. per annum, upon a revenue officer.

10. Thomas H. Harben, son of the jurat, and collector of stamp-duties, 600l. per annum.

11. Joseph Stevens, mate of the revenue boat, 60l. per annum, but a landsman.

12. Charles Wood, a superannuated revenue officer, who has resigned his pay to be maintained by the parish.

13. Henry Bean, a riding officer, 60l. per annum.

14. William Baker, ditto, and brother-in-law to the bailiff.

15. Thomas Wood, a boat-man, 30l. per annum.

16. John Wood, sen. nicknamed Roper, a boat-man, 30l. per annum, and bully to the corporation.

17. John Hood, a schoolmaster, and an honest man.

18. Thomas Hughes, a superannuated boat-man.

19. Samuel Sage, sen. a broken tide-waiter, and beggar-whipper to the magistrates.

20. Thomas Holman, an industrious labourer.

21. Robert

21. Robert Spearman Bates, a well known East-India captain, resident at Lymington.

22. Thomas Simmons, a bricklayer, and a boatman, 30l. per annum.

23. William Simmons, father to the former.

24. John Simmons.

25. William Wood, son to John Wood, a bum-bailiff, nicknamed Tippler.

26. William Harmer, jun. cow-boy.

27. Henry Putland, a drunken disorderly fellow.

28. John Wood, jun. brother to Tippler.

29. Thomas Verral.

30. John Gorringe, the person reprimanded by the committee of the house of commons for prevarication.

31. Arthur Hughes, son to Thomas Hughes.

32. Joseph Stevens, jun. son to the man,

No. 11.

33. William Hide, nicknamed Turpin, assistant to Chambers the bailiff, 30l. per annum.

34. Mr. Serjeant Kempe, recorder of this borough.

THE interest of Mr. Harben, with the assistance of so many non-resident freemen, not being

being yet deemed secure, another expedient was resorted to. Twenty-six persons, most of whom were in the employment of Mr. Harben, as diggers of chalk, at eight shillings per week each, were brought into the borough on the eve of Christmas day, 1789; when, a new poor rate being made the same evening, every one of them were taxed for such houses as were occupied by widows, custom house officers who could not vote, or freemen whom they presumed had a right of suffrages by virtue of their freedom; and one was rated for the poor house of the parish.

THESE twenty-six chalk diggers, together with the twenty-four non-resident freemen, making together fifty surreptitious votes, amounted to more than half of the whole number of legal electors in the borough; and if a returning officer could be found to admit persons of such descriptions to poll, little doubt could be now entertained of the treasury party succeeding at the ensuing election, as far at least as obtaining the return.

THE dissolution of parliament happened to take place *seventeen days* before the *six months* residence,

residence, required by the statute of 26 George III, chap. 100, was completed; in consequence of which the treasury junto found themselves involved in what appeared to be an insurmountable dilemma. The craft and contrivance of their managers, however, hit upon a scheme for extricating them. The returning officer was not compelled, by law, to proceed to election till the eighth day after proclamation, which happening to be Saturday, an adjournment took place till Monday; which manoeuvre carried them over to the tenth day, when it was agreed to dispose of the remaining seven in the following manner.

THE candidates to insist on the six oaths required by statute *, being administered to each voter, which would take up half an hour in repeating by each individual.

THE candidates and the counsel to object to every voter, objectionable or not, and to make a speech of half an hour each on his ineligibility;

* 1. Oath of allegiance. 2. Oath of supremacy. 3. Declaration of test. 4. Oath of abjuration. 5. Oath of residence, 6. Bribery oath.

which mode would occupy one hour and a half more upon each vote separately.

UNDER these obstacles, it was deemed impossible to poll more than four votes each day, till the seven days were expired; at which time the six and twenty chalk diggers might be brought forward, and polled, as having completed their six months residence.

THIS plan was actually put in practice, and this ridiculous and reproachful farce was absolutely played off for the whole seven days.

THE scene exhibited, candidates speaking against time, counsel pleading against law, clergymen abjuring popery, and the immaculate electors of Seaford purging themselves of bribery and corruption.

THE seven days being at last got over by this management, the six and twenty chalk diggers were brought forward on the eighth day, and every one of whom were admitted to poll, and received as *good votes*, by the returning officer.

FOURTEEN of the voters in Mr. Pelham's interest were rejected; *nine* housekeepers, who had lived several years in the borough, but whose political sentiments not corresponding with those of the parish officers, had not been assessed to the poor rate, though they had frequently appealed to the Seaford sessions to be admitted to pay their taxes; *four* for not having their names marked in the poor book, as having paid the last rate, one of whom was a gentleman possessing at least a thousand pounds *per annum* property, and who had been a housekeeper six and twenty years in the place; and *one* for having *moved out of an old residence into a new one since the making of the poor rate.*

THE poll, thus favoured on one side, and scrutinized on the other, appeared to contain the following numbers:

For the ministerial candidates,

John Sargent, Esq. 92

R. P. Joddrell, Esq. 91

For the opposition candidates,

Sir Godfrey Webster 48

John Tarleton, Esq. 48

A PETI.

A PETITION was presented to parliament by Sir Godfrey Webster and Mr. Tarleton, immediately on its meeting, complaining of the above return, and the partiality of the returning officer, &c. which did not come to a hearing till March last; when the twenty-four non-resident freemen, and the twenty-six chalk diggers, were declared bad votes, and ordered to be struck from off the poll, without subjecting the petitioners to the trouble of examining a single witness.

THE poll of Sargent and Joddrell was now reduced to *forty-two* and *forty-one*; and the petitioners proceeded to add *nine* to their own poll, who were housekeepers within the borough, and though not assessed to the poor rate, had paid the church and king's taxes, and had appealed against all the poor rates which had been made for several years, in consequence of their names having been omitted. It appeared, however, that their last appeal, either by *mistake* or *neglect*, had not been entered on the record of the sessions, the committee refused to hear evidence to prove their rateability.

THE

THE counsel for the petitioners next attempted to establish the four votes who had been rejected for not paying to the last rate, preceding the election to which they had been assessed. The committee, however, contrary to general expectation, refused to allow them.

THE last attempt of the petitioners was, to establish the vote of the man who had been rejected by the returning officer, for having changed his dwelling-house between the time of making the rate and the election. In this they succeeded.

THE sitting members now opened their case, and objected to nineteen votes of the petitioners, upon grounds which appeared so very frivolous, that had complete evidence been brought up to establish their validity, the author is persuaded, that not one of them could have been deemed ineligible; however, upon summing up the evidence, the committee determined against seven of them, which put one of the sitting members upon an equality with one of the petitioners, and lost Sir Godfrey Webster his seat.

ONE

ONE of the electors having polled for Sargent and Tarleton, and a second for Webster only, the latter was one of the votes disallowed by the committee, which gave the majority of *one* to Sargent and Tarleton.

THE committee, therefore, reported to the house, on the 19th March, 1792,

“ THAT John Sargent, Esq. one of the fitting members, and John Tarleton, Esq. one of the petitioners, were duly elected.”

THE committee, at the same time, reported specially,

“ THAT the right of election for the port and borough of Seaford, in the county of Sussex, is in the inhabitants house-keepers of the said town and port, paying scot and lot, *and in them only.*”

By this last resolution, the corporation, consisting of a bailiff, jurats, and freemen, which Mr. Harben, with so much difficulty and expence,

had attached to his interest, are intirely shut out from all election rights within the borough of Seaford, and the privilege is vested where the constitution originally placed it; in the inhabitants housekeepers, paying scot and and lot.

THE right hon. Thomas Pelham, who may now be considered as the patron of this borough, both from the influence of property, and the personal affections of the people, might, at any period, have supplanted that of Mr. Harben, had he condescended to have recourse to *the same means.*

THE corporation, to the author's own knowledge, made an offer of their services to Mr. Pelham, which that gentleman never honoured with an answer.

MR. HARBEN, since he has superseded Mr. Harison in the confidence of the treasury, has had the recommendation to places in the gift of government, to the amount of near two thousand pounds per annum. Amongst the persons most favoured are his own sons, and West, Martin, and Burrowes, the overseers, who were the

VOL. III. k framers

framers of the poor rates which have been the subject of so much litigation, expence, and oppression.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

RESOLVED, that the bailiff, jurats, and freemen, have *not only* voices in elections, but that the election is in the populacy. 10th Feb. 1670.

THAT by the word populacy is meant, inhabitants house-keepers, paying scot and lot. Dec. 15, 1761.

To refuse the admission of evidence, in order to shew, that in the above determinations of the house, the words "bailiff, jurats, and freemen," mean "such bailiff, jurats, and freemen only, as are resident within the said town and port." 10 Dec. 1761.

THAT the right of election is in the inhabitants house-keepers of the said town and port, paying scot and lot, and in them only. 19 March, 1792.

NUM-

Counties, Cities, and Boroughs.	When first summoned.	When discontinued.	When restored.
<i>Fareham</i> - - -	34 Edw. I.	36 Edw. I.	
<i>Odibam</i> - - -	28 Edw. I.	Ditto	
<i>Overtan</i> - - -	23 Edw. I.	2 Edw. II.	
<i>Winchester</i> - - -	Ditto		
<i>Southampton</i> - - -	Ditto		
<i>Portsmouth</i> - - -	Ditto		
<i>Yarmouth</i> - - -	Ditto	24 Edw. I.	27 Eliz.
<i>Newport</i> - - -	23 Edw. I.	24 Edw. I.	23 Eliz.
<i>New Town</i> - - -	27 Eliz.		
<i>Petersfield</i> - - -	35 Edw. I.	36 Edw. I.	1 Edw. VI. }
<i>Stockbridge</i> - - -	1 Eliz.		
<i>Christchurch</i> - - -	13 Eliz.		
<i>Lymington</i> - - -	27 Eliz.		
<i>Whitchurch</i> - - -	Ditto		
<i>Andover</i> - - -	23 Edw. I.	2 Edw. II.	27 Eliz.

HEREFORDSHIRE.

<i>Bromyard</i> - - -	33 Edw. I.	34 Edw. I.	
<i>Ledbury</i> - - -	23 Edw. I.	Ditto	
<i>Rofs</i> - - -	33 Edw. I.	Ditto	
<i>Hereford</i> - - -	23 Edw. I.		
<i>Leominster</i> - - -	Ditto		
<i>Weobly</i> - - -	Ditto	1 Edw. II.	15 Char. I.

HERTFORDSHIRE.

<i>Berkhamstead</i> - - -	11 Edw. III.	15 Edw. III.	
<i>Storteford</i> - - -	4 Edw. II.	Ditto	
<i>St. Albans</i> - - -	35 Edw. I.	6 Edw. III.	1 Edw. VI.
<i>Hertford</i> - - -	23 Edw. I.	Ditto	21 James I.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE.

<i>Huntingdon</i> - - -	23 Edw. I.		
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Counties, Cities, and Boroughs.	When first summoned.	When dis- continued.	When restored.
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KENT.

<i>Greenwich</i> - - -	4 & 5 Ph. & M.	6 Ph. & M.	
<i>Tunbridge</i> - - -	23 Edw. I.	24 Edw. I.	
Canterbury - - -	Ditto		
Rochester - - -	Ditto		
Maidstone - - -	Edw. VI.	Q. Mary.	2 Eliz.
Queenborough - - -	13. Eliz.		

LANCASHIRE.

<i>Manchester</i> - - -	Commonw.		
Lancaster - - -	23 Edw. I.	5 Edw. III.	1 Edw. VI.
Newtown - - -	1 Eliz.		
Wigan - - -	23 Edw. I.	36 Edw. I.	Ditto
Clitheroe - - -	1 Eliz.		
Liverpool - - -	23 Edw. I.	35 Edw. I.	Ditto
Preston - - -	Ditto	2 Edw. II.	Ditto

LEICESTERSHIRE.

<i>Melton Mowbray</i> - - -	11 Edw. III.	12 Edw. III.	
Leicester - - -	23 Edw. I.		

LINCOLNSHIRE.

<i>Spalding</i> - - -	11 Edw. III.	12 Edw. III.	
<i>Waynfleet</i> - - -	Ditto	Ditto	
Lincoln - - -	49 Hen. III.		
Boston - - -	11 Edw. III.	27 Edw. III.	1 Edw. VI.
Grimby - - -	23 Edw. I.		
Stamford - - -	Ditto	11 Edw. III.	Ditto
Grantham - - -	2 Edw. IV.		

MIDDLESEX.

London - - -	49 Hen. III.		
Westminster - - -	1 Edw. VI.		

Counties, Cities, and Boroughs.	When first summoned	When dis- continued.	When restored.
St. Michael - - -	6 Edw. VI.		
Newport - - -	Ditto		
St. Mawe's - - -	5 Eliz.		
Callington - - -	27 Eliz.		

CUMBERLAND.

Egremont - - -	23 Edw. I.	24 Edw. I.	
Carlisle - - -	Ditto	17 Edw. IV.	33 Hen. VIII
Cockermouth - -	Ditto	24 Edw. I.	16 Cha. I.

DERBYSHIRE.

Derby - - -	Ditto	17 Edw. IV.	33 Hen. VIII
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DEVONSHIRE.

Bradnefbam - - -	6 Edw. II.	7 Edw. II.	
Crediton - - -	35 Edw. I.	36 Edw. I.	
Exmouth - - -	14 Edw. III.	15 Edw. III.	
Trimington - - -	6 Edw. III.	7 Edw. III.	
Liddeford - - -	28 Edw. I.	30 Edw. I.	
Modbury - - -	34 Edw. I.	35 Edw. I.	
South Moulton - -	30 Edw. I.	31 Edw. I.	
Teignmouth - - -	14 Edw. III.	15 Edw. III.	
Torrington - - -	23 Edw. I.	45 Edw. III.	
Exeter - - -	Ditto	17 Edw. IV.	1 Edw. IV.
Totnefs - - -	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Plymouth - - -	26 Edw. I.	7 Edw. II.	20 Hen. VI.
Oakhampton - - -	28 Edw. I.	Ditto	16 Cha. I.
Barnstaple - - -	23 Edw. I.	17 Edw. IV.	1 Edw. VI.
Plympton - - -	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Honiton - - -	28 Edw. I.	4 Edw. II.	16 Cha. I.
Tavistock - - -	23 Edw. I.	17 Edw. IV.	1 Edw. VI.
Athburton - - -	26 Edw. I.	8 Hen. IV.	16 Cha. I.
Dartmouth - - -	Ditto	17 Edw. IV.	1 Edw. VI.
Berealston - - -	27 Eliz.		
Tiverton - - -	18 James I.		

Counties, Cities, and Boroughs.	When first summoned.	When discontinued.	When restored.
DORSETSHIRE.			
<i>Blandford</i> - - - -	23 Edw. I.	22 Edw. III.	
<i>Winborn</i>			
<i>Sherborn</i> - - - -	11 Edw. III.	12 Edw. III.	
<i>Milton</i>			
<i>Bere Regis</i>			
<i>Poole</i> - - - -	14 Edw. III.	42 Edw. III.	31 Hen. VI.
<i>Dorchester</i> - - - -	23 Edw. I.	17 Edw. IV.	1 Edw. VI.
<i>Lyme Regis</i> - - - -	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
<i>Weymouth</i> - - - -	12 Edw. II.		
<i>Melcomb Regis</i> - - -	33 Edw. I.		
<i>Bridport</i> - - - -	21 Edw. III.		
<i>Shaftsbury</i> - - - -	23 Edw. I.		
<i>Wareham</i> - - - -	30 Edw. I.		
<i>Corfe Castle</i> - - - -	14 Eliz.		
DURHAM COUNTY.			
	31 Cha. II.		
<i>City of Durham</i> - -	Ditto		
ESSEX.			
<i>Chelmsford</i> - - - -	11 Edw. III.	12 Edw. III.	
<i>Malden</i> - - - -	2 Edw. III.		
<i>Harwich</i> - - - -	17 Edw. III.	18 Edw. III.	12 James I.
<i>Colchester</i> - - - -	23 Edw. I.		
GLOUCESTERSHIRE.			
<i>Gloucester</i> - - - -	Ditto		
<i>Cirencester</i> - - - -	13 Eliz.		
<i>Tewkesbury</i> - - - -	7 James I.		
HAMPSHIRE.			
<i>Alresford</i> - - - -	23 Edw. I.	35 Edw. I.	
<i>Alton</i> - - - -	Ditto	4 Edw. II.	
<i>Basingstoke</i> - - - -	Ditto	Ditto	

A
T A B L E
OF THE
COUNTIES, CITIES, AND BOROUGHS,
OF
G R E A T B R I T A I N ;

SHEWING the Period at which each City and Borough first sent Members to Parliament ; the Names of those Places which have lost that invaluable Privilege ; the Time that each of the existing Boroughs have been deprived of their exclusive Rights ; and the different Reigns in which they have been restored.

N. B. The Names printed in *Italic* are the obsolete Boroughs.

Counties, Cities, and Boroughs.	When first summoned.	When discon- tinued	When restor- ed.
BEDFORDSHIRE.			
<i>Dunstable</i> - - -	4 Edw. II.		
Bedford - - -	23 Edw. I.		
BERKSHIRE.			
<i>Newberry</i> - - -	30 Edw. I.	11 Edw. III.	
Windfor - - -	Ditto	14 Edw. III.	7 Edw. IV.
Reading - - -	23 Edw. I.		
Wallingford - - -	Ditto		
Abingdon - - -	11 Edw. III.	12 Edw. III.	4&5 W.&M.
[E]			

Counties, Cities, and Boroughs.	When first summoned.	When discontinued.	When restored.
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.			
Buckingham - - -	11 Edw. III.	12 Edw. III.	36 H. VIII.
Wycomb - - -	28 Edw. I.	17 Edw. IV.	33 H. VIII.
Aylesbury - - -	1 Mary		
Agmondesham - - -	28 Edw. I.	2 Edw. II.	21 James I.
Wendover - - -	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Marlow - - -	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
CAMBRIDGESHIRE.			
Ely - - - - -	23 Edw. I.	27 Edw. III.	
Wisbeach - - - -			
Cambridge University	1 James I.		
Town - - - - -	23 Edw. I.	17 Edw. IV.	33 H. VIII.
CHESHIRE.			
	1 Edw. VI.		
Chester - - - -	Ditto		
CORNWALL.			
Polurru - - - -	11 Edw. III.	12 Edw. III.	
Launceston - - -	23 Edw. I.		
Leskard - - - -	Ditto	17 Edw. IV.	1 Edw. VI.
Leffwithiel - - -	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Truro - - - -	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Bodmin - - - -	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Helston - - - -	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Saltafh - - - -	6 Edw. VI.		
Camelford - - -	Ditto		
Westfloe - - - -	Ditto		
Grampound - - -	Ditto		
Eastfloe - - - -	14 Edw. III.	14 Edw. III.	13 Eliz.
Penryn - - - -	1 Mary		
Tregoney - - - -	23 Edw. I.	35 Edw. I.	1 Eliz.
Bosfiney - - - -	6 Edw. VI.		
St. Ives - - - -	4 & 5 P. & M.		
Fowey - - - -	14 Edw. III.	14 Edw. III.	13 Eliz.
St. Germans - - -	5 Eliz.		

Counties, Cities, and Boroughs.	When first summoned.	When discontinued.	When restored.
WORCESTERSHIRE.			
<i>Bromsgrove</i> - - - -	23 Edw. I.	24 Edw. I.	
<i>Dudley</i> - - - -	Do.	Do.	
<i>Kiddermminster</i> - - - -	Do.	Do.	
<i>Peribore</i> - - - -	Do.	Do.	
Worcester - - - -	Do.		
Droitwich - - - -	Do.	5 Edw. II.	Ph. & M.
Evesham - - - -	Do.	24 Edw. I.	1 Jac. I.
Bewdley - - - -	Jac. I.		
YORKSHIRE.			
<i>Doncaster</i> - - - -	23 Edw. I.	24 Edw. I.	
<i>Tervale</i> - - - -	Do.	Do.	
<i>Pickering</i> - - - -	Do.	Do.	
<i>Ravensthorpe</i> - - - -	33 Edw. I.	12 Edw. III.	
<i>Tykeshill</i> - - - -	23 Edw. I.	24 Edw. I.	
<i>Hallifax</i> - - - -	Commonw.		
<i>Whitby</i> - - - -	Do.		
<i>Leeds</i> - - - -	Do.		
York - - - -	Do.		
Hull - - - -	33 Edw. I.	34 Edw. I.	12 Edw. II.
Knarlesborough - - - -	1 Mary		
Scarborough - - - -	23 Edw. I.		
Rippon - - - -	Do.	24 Edw. I.	1 Edw. II.
		2 Edw. II.	Edw. VI.
Heydon - - - -	Do.	24 Edw. I.	1 Edw. VI.
Boroughbridge - - - -	1 Mary		
Aldborough - - - -	5 Ph. & M.		
Malton - - - -	23 Edw. I.	27 Edw. I.	Cha. II.
Thirsk - - - -	Do.	24 Edw. I.	1 Edw. VI.
Beverley - - - -	Do.	1 Edw. II.	5 Eliz.
Northallerton - - - -	26 Edw. I.	27 Edw. I.	Cha. II.
Pontefract - - - -	23 Edw. I.	Do.	19 Jac. I.
Richmond - - - -	27 Eliz.		

Counties, Cities, and Boroughs.	When first summoned.	When discontinued.	When restored.
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CINQUE PORTS,

Hastings - - -	43	Edw. III.	
Dover - - -		Do.	
Sandwich - - -		Do.	30 Edw. I.
Hythe - - -		Do.	16 Edw. II.
New Romney - - -		Do.	19 Edw. II.
Rye - - -	43	Edw. III.	18 Ric. II.
Winchelsea - - -		Do.	20 Ric. II.
Seaford - - -	26	Edw. I.	1 Hen. IV.
		27 Edw. I.	16 Car. I.
		31 Edw. I.	
		17 Edw. II.	
		20 Edw. II.	
		19 Ric. II.	
		21 Ric. II.	
		2 Hen. IV.	
<i>Calais in France.</i> - - -	27	Hen. VIII	3 Ph. & M.

WALES.

Twelve Counties - }	27	Hen. VIII
Twelve Boroughs - }		

SCOTLAND.

Thirty Counties - }	6	Anne
Fifteen Boroughs - }		

By the above Table it appears that SEVENTY-ONE boroughs, exclusive of Calais in France, which formerly sent members to parliament, are now disfranchised; and that boroughs have been created and annihilated, from the reign of Edward I. to that of Charles II. at the whim of each successive monarch. We may here be allowed to ask the enemies of reform, whether the constitution would receive a greater injury from the disfranchisement of Old Sarum, Gatton, Castle Rising, or Midhurst, than it has at present sustained from the disqualification of Leeds or Manchester. It surely becomes necessary to abolish the existing rotten boroughs, or, according to the argument of our opponents, to make the constitution complete, by restoring the seventy-one which have been discontinued.

Counties, Cities, and Boroughs.	When first summoned.	When discontinued.	When restored.
Stafford - - - -	23 Edw. I.		
Newcastle - - - -	27 Edw. III.		
Tamworth - - - -	5 Eliz.		

SUFFOLK COUNTY.

Ipswich - - - -	23 Edw. I.		
Dunwich - - - -	Do.		
Orford - - - -	Do.	1 Edw. II.	Hen, VII.
Aldborough - - - -	13 Eliz.		
Sudbury - - - -	1 Eliz.		
Eyre - - - -	13 Eliz.		
St. Edmondsbury - -	4 Jac. I.		

SURREY COUNTY.

<i>Farnham</i> - - - -	4 Edw. II.	38 Hen. VI.	
<i>Kingston upon Thames</i> -	Do.	47 Edw. III.	
Southwark			
Betchingley - - - -	23 Edw. I.		
Rygate - - - -	Do.		
Guilford - - - -	Do.		
Gatton - - - -	29 Hen. VI.		
Haslemere - - - -	27 Eliz.		

SUSSEX COUNTY.

Chichester - - - -	23 Edw. I.		
Horsham - - - -	Do.		
Medhurst - - - -	4 Edw. II.		
Lewes - - - -	23 Edw. I.		
New Shoreham - - - -	Do.		
Bramber - - - -	Do.	Edw. II.	31 Hen. VI.
Steyning - - - -	4 Edw. II.	Do.	Do.
East Grinstead - - - -	1 Edw. II.		
Arundel - - - -	23 Edw. I.		

Counties, Cities, and Boroughs.	When first summoned.	When discontinued.	When restored.
WARWICKSHIRE.			
Coventry - - -	23 Edw. I.	28 Edw. I. 25 Edw. III.	8 Edw. II. 31 Hen. VI.
Warwick - - -	Do.		
WESTMORELAND.			
Appleby - - -	Do.		
WILTSHIRE.			
Bradford - - -	Do.	24 Edw. I.	
Mere - - -	Do.	1 Edw. II.	
Highbworth - - -	26 Edw. I.	27 Edw. IV.	
Salisbury - - -	23 Edw. I.		
Wilton - - -	Do.		
Downton - - -	Do.	38 Edw. III. 2 Hen. V.	1 Hen. V. 20 Hen. VI.
Hindon - - -	27 Hen. VI.		
Heytesbury - - -	Do.		
Westbury - - -	Do.		
Calne - - -	23 Edw. I.	1 Edw. II. 36 Edw. III. 20 Edw. II.	34 Edw. II. 2 Ric. II. 4 Edw. III.
Devizes - - -	Do.	2 Edw. II.	Do.
Chippenham - - -	Do.	2 Ric. II.	12 Hen. VI.
Malmesbury - - -	Do.		
Cricklade - - -	Do.	1 Edw. II. 21 Edw. II. Ric. II. 9 Hen. V.	20 Edw. II. Edw. III. 1 Hen. IV. Hen. VI.
Great Bedwin - - -	Do.	8 Edw. II. 37 Edw. III. 10 Ric. II. 2 Hen. IV.	36 Edw. III. 7 Ric. II. 1 Hen. IV. 9 Hen. V.
Luggershall - - -	23 Edw. I.	4 Edw. II. 4 Edw. III. 10 Ric. II.	1 Edw. III. 9 Ric. II. 9 Hen. V.
Old Sarum - - -	Do.	24 Edw. I.	34 Edw. III.
Wotton Bassett - - -	25 Hen. VI.		
Marlborough - - -	23 Edw. I.		

Counties, Cities, and Boroughs.	When first summoned.	When dis- continued.	When restored.
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MONMOUTHSHIRE.

Monmouth - - - Hen. VIII

NORFOLK COUNTY.

Norwich - - - 23 Edw. I.
 Lynn Regis - - - Ditto
 Yarmouth - - - Ditto
 Thetford - - - 1 Edw. VI.
 Castle Rising - - - 5 P. & M.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

Peterborough - - - 1 Edw. VI.
 Northampton - - - 23 Edw. I.
 Brackley - - - 1 Edw. VI.
 Higham Ferrers - - - 2 & 3 P. & M.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

Bamberg - - - 23 Edw. I. 24 Edw. I.
 Carbrigg - - - Ditto Ditto
 Newcastle
 Morpeth - - - 1 Q. Mary
 Berwick - - - Hen. VIII.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE.

Nottingham
 East Retford - - - 9 Edw. II. 10 Edw. II. 13 Eliz.
 Newark - - - 29 Cha. II.

OXFORDSHIRE.

Barford - - - 34 Edw. I. 35 Edw. I.
 Chipping Norton - - - 28 Edw. I. 34 Edw. I.
 Doddington - - - 30 Edw. I. Ditto
 Whitney - - - 33 Edw. I. 5 Edw. III.

Counties, Cities, and Boroughs.	When first summoned.	When dis- continued.	When restored.
Oxford University -	James I.		
—— City - - -	23 Edw. I.		
Woodstock - - -	30 Edw. I.	34 Edw. I.	1 Q. Mary
Banbury - - -	1 Mary		

RUTLANDSHIRE.

SALOP COUNTY.

Shrewsbury - - -	23 Edw. I.	
Bridgnorth - - -	Ditto	
Ludlow - - -	12 Edw. IV.	
Wenlock - - -	Ditto	
Bishop's Cactl: - -	15 Eliz.	

SOMERSETSHIRE.

<i>Oxbridge</i> - - -	23 Edw. I.	17 Edw. III.	
<i>Chard</i> - - -	28 Edw. I.	3 Edw. III.	
<i>Dunster</i> - - -	34 Edw. III.	35 Edw. III.	
<i>Glastonbury</i> - -	12 Edw. III.	13 Edw. III.	
<i>Langport</i> - - -	33 Edw. I.	36 Edw. I.	
<i>Montacute</i> - - -	Ditto	34 Edw. I.	
<i>Stoke Cury</i> - - -	34 Edw. III.	35 Edw. III.	
<i>Watchet</i> - - -	30 Edw. I.	31 Edw. I.	
<i>Werre</i> - - -	34 Edw. I.	36 Edw. I.	
 Bristol - - -	23 Edw. I.		
Bath - - -	Ditto		
Wells - - -	Ditto		
Taunton - - -	Ditto		
Bridgewater - - -	Ditto		
Minehead - - -	1 Eliz.		
Llchester - - -	23 Edw. I.	12 Edw. III.	12 Edw. IV.
		13 Edw. IV.	18 Jac. I.
Millborne Port - -	26 Edw. I.	35 Edw. I.	15 Cha. I.

STAFFORDSHIRE.

Litchfield - - -	33 Edw. I.	27 Edw. III.	Edw. VI.
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NUMBER OF VOTERS.

EIGHTY-THREE.

RETURNING OFFICER.

THE bailiff; who ought to be chosen by the tenants and inhabitants, resident and abiding, on Michaelmas-day in every year.

PATRON.

DISPUTED between the right hon. Thomas Pelham and the treasury.

ANCIENT STATE.

SEAFORD was formerly a large town, and had four churches and chapels, till it was burnt by the enemy. It is now only a small fishing place, defended by a weak fort, erected rather for political than military purposes.

THIS place having sent members 26 and 30 Edward I. 16 and 19 Edward II. 18, 20, and 21 Richard II. and 1 Edward IV. not
as

as a port, but as a borough, ceased sending till it was restored 16 Charles I. 1640; when it was made a member of the Cinque Ports.

CORPORATION.

Consists of a bailiff, twelve jurats, (which are generally half or two-thirds kept vacant) and an indefinite number of freemen.

HISTORY

H I S T O R Y

OF THE

WELCH BOROUGHES.

INTRODUCTION.

BY an act of parliament made 27 Henry VIII. the twelve counties, and as many towns in Wales, were impriviledged to send members to parliament. The boroughs of Beaumaris, Radnor and Montgomery can alone be said to be under absolute controul. The influence which prevails in the other towns, is not the produce of corruption, but arises from the popularity and hospitality of men of considerable property, whose residences are contiguous to them, and who are ready to serve them with that assistance and advice, which the exigences of their situation may re-

quire. An instance of bribery is very uncommon among them, nor are their morals debauched by frequent invitations to election treats, which are the parents of drunkenness, idleness and dissipation, and in their consequences more generally pernicious to society than any evil which exists in it. Unaccustomed to depend upon the precarious subsistence, which they may derive from a sale of their votes, they are continually exercised in being useful to the community, by the laborious employments in which they are engaged. Unlike the inhabitants of the rotten boroughs, who enjoy at one time the extreme of luxury, and at another are reduced to the most abject poverty, they divide amongst their families the hard, but well earned fruits of their labour and their industry.

ANGLESEA.

ANGLESEA.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE representation of this county was warmly contested in 1784, between Mr. Bayley, supported by the interest of his brother, the Earl of Uxbridge, and Mr. Meyrick, by that of Lord Viscount Bulkeley; the former of whom was then successful. But these two noblemen have agreed since that time not to oppose each other, either in this county or Carnarvon; so that the influence of the Earl of Uxbridge returns the member for Anglesea without opposition, and Lord Viscount Bulkeley, unmolested, procures the return of a representative of his recommendation for Carnarvonshire.

ANCIENT STATE.

ANGLESEA obtained its name in the reign of Edward I. when it was conquered by the English, who called it Englesea and Anglesey (the English Island). It was called by the Romans, Mona; by the Britons, Môn, and Fîr Môn; and, by the Saxons, Moneg. It is situated in the province of Canterbury, and diocese of Bangor; containing

fix hundreds, two market-towns, and seventy-four parishes; extending thirty miles in length and twenty-six in breadth. It is separated from the continent by a narrow strait, called the River of Menai, and is surrounded by the Irish Sea.

This island sends two members to parliament, viz. one for the county, the other for Beaumaris; and gives the title of Earl to the family of Annesley.

BEAUMARIS.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS town is the only place in Wales where the right of election is confined to the corporation only, which consists of twenty-four members; so that thirteen persons, which form a majority of these twenty-four, return the member for this county-town. This body corporate is under the sole influence and direction of Lord Viscount Bulkeley.

ANCIENT STATE.

THIS town, which is so called from the French word *Beaumaris*, signifying a *beautiful morass*, was
founded

founded by Edward I. who changed the name from Bonover, and fortified it with a castle, now belonging to the crown. It is situated on the western bank of the Strait Menai, in the road to Holyhead, at the distance of 24½ miles from London.

By act of 27 Henry VIII. the twelve counties, and as many towns in Wales, were impriviledged and summoned to send members to parliament. The first returns for the borough of this county were, 33 Hen. VIII. and 1 Edw. VI. for Newborough, now a poor decayed village; which being exempted by act 2 Edw. VI. have ever since been limited to Beaumaris.

CORPORATION.

By charter of incorporation of 4 Eliz. it consists of a mayor, recorder, two bailiffs, and twenty-one burgessees.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1709, 18 Feb. 1729, 3 Mar. In the mayor, bailiffs, and capital burgessees of Beaumaris only.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Twenty-four.

[B 3]

RETURNING

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

PATRON.

Lord Viscount Bulkeley.

BRECON COUNTY.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE principal interest in this county is in John Morgan of Tredegar, Esq. member for the county of Monmouth. The immense property of this gentleman and his ancestors, is distinguishable in the political history of Monmouthshire, ever since it first sent representatives to parliament; but it commenced in this county about the time of Charles I.

ANCIENT STATE.

THIS county, which is a part of South Wales, is supposed to have received its name from the Welch word Brycheinog, derived, by some authors, from Brechanus, an ancient British prince
of

of the country. It is situated in the province of Canterbury, and diocese of St. David; containing six hundreds, four market-towns, and sixty-one parishes; extending, in length, about thirty-nine miles, in breadth, twenty-seven, and one hundred and nine in circumference.

This county sends two members to parliament, viz. one for the county, and the other for the town of Brecon.

BRECON TOWN.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE right of election in this town is not confined, as at Beaumaris, to a select corporation, consisting of twenty-four individuals, but extends to the burghesses at large of the town of Brecon, who are upwards of three hundred in number. The same interest which directs the political bias of the county, prevails also in this town.

ANCIENT STATE.

BRECON, or Brecknock, which was called by the Britons, Aber-hondhy, owing to its situation

at the confluence of the rivers Hondhy and Uſk, is a corporate town, divided into eleven wards. It contains three parish churches, one of which is collegiate. That it was inhabited by the Romans is evident, from several coins of their emperors, as well as many Roman bricks having been discovered at a Roman camp in the neighbourhood.

In the reign of Henry I. Barnard de Newmarch founded a priory for Benedictine Monks, which he dedicated to St. John the Evangelist, and made subordinate to Battle Abbey, in Suffex. Henry VIII. re-founded it as a parish church, with fourteen prebendaries, which he translated from Aber-Giviley, in Caermarthenſhire. In the reign of William Rufus, the before-named Barnard de Newmarch, who was the conqueror of this county, built a magnificent caſtle, which was afterwards repaired by the Bruſes and Bohuns. Dr. Morton, Biſhop of Ely, was confined in this caſtle by the Protector Richard, afterwards Richard III. and committed to the cuſtody of Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, who procured Richard the crown. But the king ſoon afterwards taking a diſguſt to the duke, he entered into a league with the biſhop his priſoner, to contrive
his

his overthrow, which was soon after compleated, when the Earl of Richmond, afterwards Henry VII. was promoted to the crown in his stead.

This town, which, without conjunction with any other, sends one burges to parliament, was incorporated anno 1555, in the second year of Queen Mary's reign.

CORPORATION.

Consists of two bailiffs, twelve aldermen, and fifteen common-councilmen.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

In the corporation and free burgeses.

NUMBER OF VOTERS,

Near three hundred.

RETURNING OFFICERS.

The bailiffs.

PATRON.

John Morgan, Esq.

CARDIGAN

CARDIGAN COUNTY.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE influence which prevails in this county is that of the Earl of Lisburne and John Campbell, Esq. of Stackpole Court, in Pembroke-shire. The Earl of Lisburne has the leading interest, and has for many years been returned without opposition.

ANCIENT STATE.

THIS county, which takes its name from the town of Cardigan, is called by the Welch Sir Aber Teivy, and lies along the Irish Sea, which bounds it on the west. It is situated in the province of Canterbury and diocese of St. David; is divided into five hundreds, containing six market towns, and sends two members to parliament, viz. one knight of the shire, and one burgess for Cardigan.

This place was formerly famous for its silver mines, which in the time of Queen Elizabeth were worked to great advantage by a company of Germans. In the reign of James I. Sir Hugh Middleton

dleton made a vast fortune from these mines, which he afterwards spent in bringing the New River water to London. After him a Mr. Bushel gained such immense sums here, that Charles I. allowed him to set up a mint for the convenience of paying his workmen; in return for which, it is said, that he made that king a present of a regiment of horse in the civil wars, clothed his whole army, and lent him 40,000*l*. The mine adventurers after this expended considerable sums of money, and succeeded very well, till they fell out among themselves, which has not only been a hindrance to the working these mines, but to mining in general.

CARDIGAN.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE member of parliament for this place is elected by the burgesses at large of this town, in conjunction with those of the outlying boroughs of Aberystwith, Lampeter, and Adpar, amounting in the whole to twelve hundred voters. The principal interest in those several boroughs is that of Thomas Jones, Esq. of Croft Castle, in the
county

county of Hereford, John Adams, Esq. Edward Loveden Loveden, Esq. of Buscot, in the county of Berks, and Thomas Powel, Esq. of Nanteis.

ANCIENT STATE.

THIS town is situated near the western extremity of the county, and is called by the Welch Aber Teivy, from its situation at the mouth of the river Teivy. Whence the name of Cardigan is derived is not yet discovered; however, it gives the title of Earl to the family of Brudenel. About the year 1160 Gilbert de Clare built a large castle here, which was afterwards destroyed by Rhees ap Gryffyth, the ruins of which are still to be seen. There was also a priory of black monks, dedicated to St. Mary, and subordinate to the abbey of Chertsey, in Surrey.

In the year 1136 the Welch obtained a complete victory near this town over the English army, commanded by Ranulph, Earl of Chester. In this battle the English soldiers were struck with such a panic, that they suffered themselves to be taken prisoners by the women; the general, with a very few men, finding it difficult to make his escape.

CORPORATION.

CARDIGAN.

13

CORPORATION.

By charter of 25 Eliz. it consists of a mayor, two bailiffs, and twelve aldermen.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1730, 7 May. Is in the burgessees at large, of the boroughs of Cardigan, Aberystwith, Lampeter, and Atpar, only.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Upwards of twelve hundred.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

PATRON.

Thomas Johnes, Esq.

CAERMAR.

CAERMARTHEN COUNTY.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS county is principally under the interest of Lady Cecil Rice de Cardonnel, Baroneſs Dinevor in her own right. The popularity which George Rice, Eſq: that lady's huſband, acquired during his life-time, induced the freeholders of the county to elect his ſon, the Honourable George Talbot Rice, at the laſt general election, without any expence, and in preference to their late member, Sir William Manſel.

ANCIENT STATE.

THIS county, which takes its name from the town of Caermarthen, or, as the Welch call it, Kaer Vyrddin, is a maritime county, bounded on the north, by Cardiganſhire, on the ſouth, by St. George's Channel and the Severn, on the eaſt, by Brecknockſhire and Glamorganſhire, and on the weſt, by Pembrokeſhire. It is ſituated in the province of Canterbury and diocēſe of St. David; and is divided into ſix hundreds, containing eighty-ſeven pariſhes and eight market towns, extending in length about thirty-five miles, in breadth
twenty,

twenty, and one hundred and two in circumference. It sends two members to parliament, viz. one for the county, and one for the town of Caermarthen; and gives the title of Marquis to the family of Osborne.

CAERMARTHEN.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS town, which is under the influence of John George Philipps, Esq. of Cumgwilly, is remarkable for the illegal and unconstitutional interference of a right reverend Bishop, in the election of its representative; but as there was no formal complaint brought against him in the House of Commons, he escaped those consequences which befel the Bishop of Worcester in the reign of Queen Ann, for an attempt to prejudice the freeholders of that county against Sir John Packington, who was at that time a candidate to represent it in parliament. Mr. Philipps, the present member, had, by the vote which he gave in favour of the repeal of the Test Act, so much incensed his lordship, as to induce him to write circular letters to the clergy, who had votes
for

for the election of members of parliament, stating the imminent danger the church would be reduced to by the repeal of this Act, and requesting that they would strenuously exert themselves in opposing such candidates as were friendly to this measure. Sir William Mansel, who was the member for the county, and voted against the repeal, thought proper to decline a contest at the last general election with so powerful an adversary as the Honourable George Talbot Rice, of Dinevor; but he entertained hopes of success with a greater degree of probability in the borough, when assisted with the abilities and advice of his spiritual guide and director. However, neither the threats nor intreaties of this great pillar of the church, were finally productive of any good consequences, as Sir W. Mansel declined the poll, and Mr. Philipps was chosen without opposition.

ANCIENT STATE.

CAERMARTHEN, which is a place of great antiquity, and the capital of the county, was called by Ptolemy, Maridunum, but by Antoninus, Muridunum, both evident corruptions of the name above-mentioned; it being customary with the Romans to substitute, on some occasions, the letter M or V.

This

This town was formerly reckoned the capital of all Wales, and the Ancient Britons made it the seat of their parliaments, or assemblies of wise men. When the eldest sons of our kings became princes of Wales, they fixed the chancery and exchequer, for the south part of their principality, at this place, where they continued till the jurisdiction of the court and marches of Wales were taken away.

This place is famous, among other things, for the birth of the wise Merlin, which happened about the year 480. Before the year 1148, there was a priory erected at the east end of the town, for six black canons, and dedicated to St. John the Evangelist, of which the ruins are still visible. There was also a house of grey friars.

CORPORATION.

It is governed by a mayor, recorder, two sheriffs, and twenty common-councilmen, out of which the mayor is chosen, who is ever after reputed an alderman. By charter of James I. it also consists of a sword-bearer.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1727, 7 Mar. Is in the burgesſes of the ſaid borough.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Near five hundred.

RETURNING OFFICERS.

The ſheriffs.

PATRON.

J. G. Phillips, Eſq.

CAERNARVON COUNTY.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE leading intereſt in this county is like that of Angleſea, between the Earl of Uxbridge, and Lord Viſcount Bulkeley; but theſe noblemen having agreed not to oppoſe each other in their reſpective counties, the influence of Angleſea is left to Lord Uxbridge, and the controul of this county to Lord Bulkeley.

·ANCIENT

ANCIENT STATE.

THIS county, which, like most of the others, takes its name from Caernarvon, signifying the Fortress of Avon, which it was once called, is in Welch called Sir Gaernarvon; and, before Wales was divided into counties, was called Snowden Forest. It is situated in the province of Canterbury and diocese of Bangor; is divided into seven hundreds, containing one city, three market-towns, and sixty-eight parishes; extending, in length, about forty miles, in breadth, twenty, and nearly one hundred in circumference. It sends two members to parliament, viz. one for the shire, and one for the borough of Carnarvon; and gives the titles of Earl and Marquis to the family of Bridges, for some successions Dukes of Chandos.

CAERNARVON TOWN.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS borough sends one member to parliament, in conjunction with the burgeses of Criccieth, Pwillely, Nevin, and Conway. The Earl of Ux-

[C 2]

bridge

bridge has at present the leading interest, but it is by no means secure, like that of Beaumaris, or Montgomery.

ANCIENT STATE.

CAERNARVON, which is situated on the Straits of Meneu or Menay, the channel which separates this county from the Isle of Anglesea, is supposed to have contained the ancient Segontium of Antoninus. It was called by the Britons, Caer Seint, from the river Seiont, which runs by it. About the year 600, it was the seat of the British princes; but in after times it gave way to the present town, then newly built.

When Edward I. was building this town, it was reported that the body of the Emperor Constantius, father of Constantine the Great, being found here, he ordered it to be honourably interred in the new church. This king is also said to have converted the profits of the archbishopric of York, then vacant, to the building and fortifying Caernarvon Castle; in the Eagle Tower of which castle, in the year 1284, was born Edward of Caernarvon, the first Prince of Wales of the English blood, and afterwards king, by the title of
Edward

Edward II. In the great rebellion, this castle was besieged by the parliamentary forces, and obliged to surrender to them the beginning of June, 1646.

CORPORATION.

Consists of a mayor, who is, by patent, created constable of the castle, one alderman, two bailiffs, a town-clerk, and two serjeants at mace.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

In the burgeses of Caernarvon, Criccieth, Pwllhely, Nevin, and Conway.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About seven hundred.

RETURNING OFFICERS.

The mayor and bailiffs.

PATRON.

Lord Viscount Bulkeley,

DENBIGH COUNTY.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE most prevailing interest in this county, is that of Sir Watkin Williams Wynne, Bart, whose chief seat is at Ruabon, near Wrexham. Mr. Middleton, of Chirk Castle, whose ancestors have represented it, at various times, since it first sent members to parliament, which was in the 27th year of the reign of Henry VIII. has the second influence; but as the most perfect cordiality prevails between these families, the first takes the lead in the county, and the other in the town, without giving cause for opposition in either.

ANCIENT STATE.

THIS county, which forms a part of North Wales, is called in British, Sir Dhinbech, and is situated in the dioceses of Bangor and St. Asaph, and province of Canterbury; it is divided into twelve hundreds, in which are contained four market towns, and fifty-seven parishes, extending about thirty-one miles in length, seventeen in breadth, and nearly one hundred and eighteen in circumference.

In

In the time of the Romans it was part of the country of the Ordovices; but some Britons, who were forced out of Scotland, are said in their turn to have driven the Saxons hence, and, by the assistance of the Welch, to have possessed themselves of all this district, from the Conway to the Dee. It sends two members to parliament, viz. one for the county, and one for the town of Denbigh; and gives the title of Earl to the family of Fielding.

DENBIGH TOWN.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE member for this town is chosen by the burgesſes of Denbigh, and its two contributory boroughs, Leon and Ruthen. The influence of which is entirely in Richard Middleton, Eſq. of Chirke Caſtle, whoſe anceſtors have repreſented it, in various parliaments, from the 33d of Henry VIII. to the preſent time.

ANCIENT STATE.

DENBIGH, which is the county town, was originally ſituated on the top of a ſteep rock, near

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the

the western bank of the river Clwyd, at the distance of 209 miles from London; but being deserted in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, a new town was built, on a much larger scale, at the foot of the hill. It was formerly called by the Britons Cledfryn yn Rhos, the craggy Hill in Rhos. This part of the county was given by Edward I. to David ap Gryffytin, brother to Llewellyn, the last Prince of North Wales, who being afterwards beheaded for high treason, it was given to Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, who fortified the town with a strong wall and castle; but his only son being unfortunately drowned in the well of this castle, his grief was so great as to leave it unfinished; after this earl's death, it went, by the marriage of Alice, his daughter, into the possession of the House of Lancaster. Edward II. gave it to Hugh Spencer; after which, in the reign of Edward III. Roger Mortimer became the possessor, and fixed his arms on the chief gate; but he being some time after executed for high treason, it went to Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, but was soon after restored to the Mortimers. In short, after many changes, it came to the House of York, and now belongs to the crown. It was delivered up to the parliament army in 1646, and appears to have been
a place

a place of such strength, that after the Restoration it was thought advisable to blow it up.

About the time of Henry III. Adam Salusbury founded and endowed an abbey of black monks, of the Benedictine order ; the present proprietor of the ruins of which is Sir Lynch Salusbury Cotton.

CORPORATION.

By charter of incorporation of 14 Charles II. it consists of a mayor, two aldermen, a recorder, two bailiffs, twenty-three burgessees, a town-clerk, and two serjeants at mace.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1743, 7 Feb. Is in the burgessees, inhabitants of the boroughs of Denbigh, Ruthyn, and Holt, respectively.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About five hundred.

RETURNING OFFICERS,

The bailiffs.

PATRON.

R. Middleton, Esq.

FLINT

FLINT COUNTY.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS county is independent in the exercise of its political franchises. The principal individual interest here is that of Sir Roger Mostyn, Bart. its present representative; but it is by no means sufficient to dictate to the freeholders person that shall represent them in parliament.

ANCIENT STATE.

THIS county, which is in North Wales, and derives its name from Flint, the county town, is situated in the province of Canterbury, and partly in the dioceses of St. Asaph and Chester. It is divided into five hundreds, containing one city, two market towns, and about twenty-eight parishes; and is the smallest of all the Welch counties, being about thirty-three miles in length, only nine miles in breadth, and about seventy miles in circumference. It sends two members to parliament, viz. one for the county, and the other for Flint.

FLINT

FLINT TOWN.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS town, and its contributory boroughs, Caerwis, Overton, Rhyddlan, and Caergoerley, has a greater number of votes in the election of its representative than any other in the county. The chief interest which prevails here is Sir Watkin Williams Wynne's, whose relation, Major Williams, of Penbedw, is the present member.

ANCIENT STATE.

FLINT, which is a very small place, is conveniently situated on the estuary of the Dee, and is remarkable for little else besides a castle, which was begun by Henry II. and finished by Edward I. where Richard II. on his return from Ireland was entertained for some time; but on his departure was taken prisoner, and soon after put to death.

CORPORATION.

Consists of a mayor, who is, by patent, constable of the castle, and two bailiffs.

RIGHT

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1728, 21 May. Is in the inhabitants of the borough of Flint, Rhyddlan, Overton, Caerwis, Caergoerley, paying scot and lot.

The inhabitants of Knolton and Overton, foreign, paying scot and lot in the parish of Overton, have a right to vote for the town of Flint.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About one thousand.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

PATRON.

Sir Watkin Williams Wynn.

GLAMOR-

GLAMORGANSHIRE.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS county has recently given us an example of its being independent of, and uninfluenced by, aristocratical controul.

The Duke of Beaufort, Earl of Plymouth, Earl of Bute, and Lord Vernon, men of different parties and sentiments in politics, united their several interests, and nominated the Honourable T. Windfor, brother to the Earl of Plymouth, for their candidate to represent it in parliament. The independent freeholders vigorously opposed this formidable combination, which had for its object the dictation of a representative ; and their exertions, previous to the election, were so effectual in favour of Thomas Wyndham, Esq. of Dunraven Castle, their own candidate, that Captain Windfor, although assisted by so powerful an union, did not think it convenient to stand the poll, and left his adversary quietly to enjoy that honour, which the patriotism of his friends had so justly bestowed on him.

ANCIENT

ANCIENT STATE.

GLAMORGANSHIRE received its name from a contraction of the Welch words, Gwlad Morgan, or the county of Morgan, supposed to have been thus called from a prince of this part of the country, who was said to have been killed eight thousand years before the birth of our Saviour; other writers, perhaps with more propriety, derive the name from the word Mor, which, in the British tongue, signifies the sea, this being a maritime county. It lies in the province of Canterbury, partly in the diocese of St. Llandaff, and partly in that of St. David, and is divided into ten hundreds, containing one city, five market towns, and eighteen parishes, extending forty-eight miles in length, twenty-seven in breadth, and one hundred and sixteen in circumference. It sends two members to parliament; viz. one for the shire, and one for the town of Cardiff.

CARDIFF.

CARDIFF.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS town, in conjunction with Cowbridge, Swansea, Lougher, Aberavon, Kenfigg, Neath, and Llantrissant, sends one member to parliament. The interest of the Earl of Bute prevails principally in Cardiff and Cowbridge; that of the Duke of Beaufort, in Swansea and Lougher; that of Thomas Mansel Talbot, Esq. of Margam, in Aberavon and Kenfigg; and that of Sir Robert Mackworth, in Neath. Lord Viscount, Mountstuart, son to the Earl of Bute, is the present representative, to which honour he succeeded upon the death of the late Sir Herbert Mackworth; which is a plain indication of the agreement of the above gentlemen, that the representation of this town shall be confined to one or other of their own family.

ANCIENT STATE.

CARDIFF, or Caerdiff, the first town on the south-east part of the county, is thus called from its being situated on the river Taff. It is inclosed by a wall with four gates, and a castle, which is a strong,

strong, stately edifice; the constable of which is always the first magistrate of the town.

This castle, which is now a lordship belonging to Lord Viscount Windsor, was built about the year 1100, by Robert Fitz-Staimon, a Norman, who held his courts of justice, and kept a strong garrison here, his peers or knights being obliged to defend their several stations. Curthose, eldest son of William the Conqueror, was imprisoned here by his brothers, who first deprived him of his eyes, as well as all hopes of the crown. In the year 1131 it was taken by Maelgon and Rhys Gryg, with Prince Llewellyn's forces.

Robert, Earl of Gloucester, who died in the year 1147, founded a priory in this town; the suburbs of which contained a house of grey friars, dedicated to St. Francis; a house of white friars; and a monastery of black friars.

This being the county town, a court of record is held here every fortnight, of which the bailiffs, who are also justices of the peace, are the only judges; here also the assizes are always held.

CORPORATION.

CORPORATION.

The corporation is very ancient, and consists of a mayor, who, as chief magistrate, is constable of the castle, twelve aldermen, two bailiffs, who are annually chosen from among the aldermen, and twelve common-councilmen.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

Not only in the burghesses of this place, but in the burghesses of Aberavon, Cowbridge, Kenfigg, Llantriffent, Lougher, Neth, and Swansea.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About one thousand.

PATRON.

Earl of Bute.

MERIONETHSHIRE.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

SIR Watkin Williams Wynne has the first interest in this county ; but it is not decisive in the election of its representative, as was demonstrated at the last vacancy, occasioned by the death of their old and respectable member, Mr. Vaughan, of Corfygedol, when a gentleman of opposite attachments to those of the Wynne family was chosen.

There being no borough in this county adjudged proper to be made choice of to nominate a burghers, when the principality was first privileged to send members by act of parliament, which was 27 Hen. VIII. proves that some regard was had at that time to the equality of representation, and that care was taken not to constitute a representative body without constituents, as is too often the case in the present times. It was therefore enacted, that Haverfordwest, a large town in Pembrokeshire, should elect a member to make up the deficiency.

ANCIENT

ANCIENT STATE.

MERIONETHSHIRE, or Merionydshire, so called from the Welch, *Sîr Veirionydh*, is situated in the province of Canterbury, and diocese of Bangor, and is generally considered as the most mountainous and barren county in all Wales. It is divided into six hundreds, containing thirty-seven parishes, and three market towns, viz. Bala, Dolgalhe, and Disnamoudy; extending, in length, thirty-five miles, twenty-five in breadth, and one hundred and eighteen in circumference; and sends only one member to parliament, who is knight of the shire.

In the time of the Romans this part of the country was inhabited by the Ordovices, who were generally considered as a great and powerful people.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE Earl of Powys has been considered as possessing the first interest in this county. Mr. Owen, the present member, succeeded upon it on his first election ; but Sir Watkin Williams Wynne, having now united his influence with that of Mr. Owen, we understand that gentleman can now secure his seat, in opposition to Lord Powys.

ANCIENT STATE.

MONTGOMERYSHIRE, which is an inland mountainous county of North Wales, derives its name from Montgomery, the principal town, called in the Welch language *Sîr-dre-Valdwin*. It is situated in the province of Canterbury, and in the dioceses of St. Asaph, Bangor, and Hereford ; containing five market towns, all of which are boroughs, and forty-seven parishes ; extending, in length, thirty miles, twenty-five in breadth, and ninety-four in circumference. It sends two members to parliament, viz. one knight of the shire for the county, and one jointly for Montgomery

mery, Welchpool, Machynleth, Llanvilling, and Llanidlos.

This county, as well as Merionethshire, formed part of the territories of the Ordovices.

MONTGOMERY TOWN.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS town, like all the others in Wales which were impriviledged to fend members to parliament, had its contributory boroughs, who participated in the invaluable right of election, until the year 1728, when one of those resolutions of the house, which has swept away the constituents of most of the English boroughs, extending the disfranchising arm of authority to those of Llanidlos, Llanvilling, and Welchpool, which are now stripped of their ancient privileges, and the right declared to be in the burgesses of Montgomery *only*. The number of electors are now not more than eighty; consequently the independence of its parliamentary character is at an end, and the borough,

like that of Beaumaris, is entirely at the disposal of a patron.

ANCIENT STATE.

MONTGOMERY, which is the county town, is situated on a rising rock, at the distance of one hundred and fifty-eight miles north-west of London, and is said to have been built by Valdwyn, or Baldwin, lieutenant of the marches of Wales, in the time of William the Conqueror; for which reason the Britons call it Tre-Valdwyn, or Baldwin's Town; but the English name it from Roger Montgomery, to whom William I. had given the Earldoms of Arundel and Shrewsbury, who gained the castle and town of Baldwin. This castle was afterwards demolished by the Welch; but William Rufus re-edified it in 1093; after which it was burnt by Henry III. in 1232. Being once more re-built, it became the seat of the Lords Herbert of Cherbury. Since that time it was considerably impaired in the civil wars of Charles I. till at length it came again into the possession of the family of the Herberts, where, in all probability, it still remains.

This was made a borough town in the reign of Henry III.

CORPORATION.

CORPORATION.

Consists of two bailiffs, and twelve burgesſes or common-councilmen.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1728, 16 Apr. It in the burgesſes of the ſaid ſhire-town only.

Formerly the boroughs of Llanidlos, Llanvilling, and Welchpool, joined in the election ; but theſe outlying boroughs are now excluded.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Eighty.

RETURNING OFFICERS.

The bailiffs.

PATRON.

The Earl of Powys.

PEMBROKE COUNTY.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE freeholders of this county have, upon many occasions, shewn a spirit of independence. If any influence can be said to exist here, it is that of the Owen family, of Orielson, in this county ; but this partiality arises, not so much from the extent of their property, as from their invariable attachment to the cause of liberty.

In 1780, Lord Milford and Lord Kensington united their interest, the former of whom then became a candidate for the representation of the county. The independent party viewed this union with a jealous eye, and conceived it formed for the purpose of depriving them virtually of their rights as electors ; they therefore exerted themselves with redoubled vigour, in support of their favourite candidate Sir Hugh Owen, who was finally successful by a great majority.

ANCIENT STATE.

THIS county, which takes its name from Pembroke, the principal town, is situated at the south-west

west extremity of Wales, in the province of Canterbury, and diocese of St. David, and contains many monuments of the Ancient Britons, as well as some ancient tumuli, or artificial mounts, in which urns have been buried; one of the most remarkable of which being opened, was found to contain five urns filled with burnt bones and ashes.

In this county, at a place called, by the Welch, Rhos, meaning a green field, Henry I. permitted a colony of Flemings to settle, owing to the injury they had suffered in their own county, by the sea breaking down their dykes, and otherwise doing them incredible damage; which colony was, in Camden's time, called Little England beyond Wales; whose inhabitants were so stout and resolute, that they became very offensive to the Welch by their frequent skirmishes; insomuch that they united all their forces, and invaded their country several times, but to no purpose, the Flemings always maintaining their ground. Rhos is still inhabited by their descendants, whose people may be distinguished by their speech and customs.

This county is divided into seven hundreds, containing the city of St. David, and the seven following

following market towns; viz. Fisguard, Haverfordwest, Killgaring, Newport, Pembroke, Tenby, and Wiston; it has one hundred and forty-five parishes, and extends in length upwards of thirty miles, above twenty-two in breadth, and about one hundred and twenty in circumference.

This place sends three members to parliament; viz. one knight of the shire for the county, one representative for the borough of Pembroke, and another for the borough of Haverfordwest.

PEMBROKE TOWN.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS town has for some years been under the influence of the Owen family. The burgesses of this place, in conjunction with those of Wiston and Tenby, elect the member. There is no special resolution of the House of Commons, respecting the right of the burgesses of Tenby, but with respect to those of Wiston, it has been resolved, That the mayor and burgesses of the ancient borough of Wiston, in the county of Pembroke,

broke, have a right to vote in the election for the borough of Pembroke.

ANCIENT STATE.

PEMBROKE, which stands upon a creek of Milford Haven, in the most pleasant part of Wales, derives its name from the ancient British word *Penvro*, signifying a cape or promontory. It is the county town, and, next to Caermarthen, the largest and richest town in South Wales. In the reign of Henry I. Arnulph de Montgomery, brother to the Earl of Shrewsbury, fortified it with walls, and a magnificent castle, which he built on a rock at the west end of the town; under which is a vault, called *Wogan*, remarkable for its echo, and supposed to have been a store-room for the garrison. This structure being burnt a few years after, was rebuilt by Owen, the son of Cadogan of Bletheim, and is remarkable for being the birth-place of Henry VII. as also for the brave defence made by the garrison for King Charles I.

Pembroke has given the title of Earl to many royal as well as noble families; the last of which appears to have been given in the reign of Edward VI. to the family of Herberts, who still continue to enjoy it.

CORPORATION.

CORPORATION.

It is governed by a mayor, two bailiffs, and burgesſes.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1711, 1712, 23 Feb. That the mayor and burgesſes of the ancient borough of Wiſton, in the county of Pembroke, have a right to vote in the election for the borough of Pembroke.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

Five hundred.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

PATRON.

H. Barlow, Eſq.

HAVERFORDWEST.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS place, which was made a county of itſelf, firſt by charter of Edward IV. afterwards by Henry VIII. and laſtly by James I. is under the influence of Lord Milford, of Piſton Caſtle. A
compromiſe

compromise has some time ago taken place between this nobleman and Lord Kensington, when it was agreed between them, that the latter should, upon his supporting invariably the interest of the former in the county of Pembroke, be quietly put into the possession of a seat for this town.

ANCIENT STATE.

THIS town, which by charters of Edward IV. Hen. VIII. and James I. is a county of itself, is called by the Welch, Hwlfordh, and is situated on the side of a hill, forming part of the western bank of the Dougledye. It enjoys several privileges, besides that of keeping its own courts. The mayor is coroner, escheator, and clerk of the markets within its precincts. The assizes are held here, where there is also a county gaol.

Haverfordwest was formerly fortified with a rampart and castle, supposed to have been erected by Gilbert, Earl of Clare; it was one of those possessed by the Flemings when they first came into Dyvet, or Pembrokeshire, the fortifications of which were destroyed in the civil wars of Charles I.

Robert

Robert de Haverford founded here a priory of black canons, and gave it several churches and tythes in his barony, which were all confirmed to them by Edward III. About seventy years ago an effigy was found, supposed to be that of David Cherbury, Bishop of Dromore in Ireland, and Archdeacon of Brecknock, who, by his last will, desired to be buried here, and left a legacy towards rebuilding the cloisters of this priory.

CORPORATION.

Consists of a mayor, sheriff, two bailiffs, and twenty-four common councilmen.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1714, 4 July. The proceeding of the mayor and common council of the town of Haverfordwest, in making burgeses without the consent of the commonalty, was illegal, and contrary to the rights of the said town; and that the burgeses so pretended to be made, have not thereby acquired any right of voting in any future elections.

Agreed to be in the freeholders, burgeses, and inhabitants, paying scot and lot, and not receiving alms.

NUMBER

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About five hundred.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The mayor.

PATRON.

Lord Milford.

RADNOR COUNTY.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE interest of this county centers entirely in the Earl of Oxford. No political occurrence has happened to extend our observations beyond that circumstance.

ANCIENT STATE.

THIS place, which is an inland county of South Wales, derives its name from Radnor, the county town, and is called by the Welch *Sir Vaes-ived*. It is divided into six hundreds, containing three market towns, viz. Radnor, Knighton, and Prestein,

tein, extending twenty-four miles in length, twenty-two in breadth, and ninety-five miles in circumference; at the distance of one hundred and fifty miles from London. It sends two members to parliament, viz. one knight of the shire, and one burges for the borough of Radnor.

In the time of the Romans this part of the country was inhabited by the Silures; most of the mountains have carns, or large heaps of stones, intended, no doubt, as monuments for the dead; according to Homer's account, indeed, of Hector's funeral, there can be no doubt but the Romans heaped them up for that purpose; but after Christianity was planted here, they became so detestable, from being made the burial place of malefactors only, that the worst wish a man could express to his enemy, was, that a carn might be his monument. One of the most ancient remains of this county, is an unfinished work, called Offa's Dyke, from its having been cut by Offa, King of Mercia, as a boundary between the English Saxons and Ancient Britons, which may be traced through the whole extent of the county.

RADNOR

RADNOR TOWN.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THIS town has been subject to various contests on the right of election. The question at issue has been, whether the word *Burgeses* meant such as were resident within the boroughs of New Radnor, Ryader, Knighton, Knucklas, and Revenlice, only, or whether it extended to those who did not reside within the said boroughs. Three petitions have been presented to the House since the passing of the Grenville Act, which have all originated in this dispute. The first was, that of Edward Lewes, Esq. on the 6th of December, 1774, against the election of John Lewes, Esq. who had been returned by the resident burgeses, which was determined on the 27th of January, 1775, in favour of the petitioner. The second was, in consequence of a double return of both these gentlemen at the ensuing general election in 1780, which on the 31st of January, 1781, was likewise determined in favour of the non-resident burgeses; and the third, arose out of a contest at the last general election in 1790, when the Earl of Oxford, who is patron of this borough, thought proper to

withdraw his countenance from Mr. Edward Lewes, the late member, and to support his relation, David Murray, Esq. Mr. Lewes, who had before experienced the influence of his lordship's patronage, and had twice succeeded by petition, on the claim of the non-resident burgessees, now became a candidate on that of the resident ones; when the numbers upon the poll were,

For David Murray, Esq.	—	609
Edward Lewes, Esq.	—	313

Mr. Murray was accordingly returned, and Mr. Lewes became a petitioner upon the same claim of right which he had formerly opposed, and against which he had twice succeeded by petition. This petition is now before the House, and will most probably be decided this present session.

ANCIENT STATE.

RADNOR, which is also called New Radnor, in order to distinguish it from a place called Old Radnor, is situated near the spring head of the river Somervil, near the forest of Radnor. It was formerly defended by walls, and a castle, which being demolished by Owen Glendower, the town daily decayed.

It

It was an ancient borough by prescription till the reign of Queen Elizabeth, who granted it a charter, with many privileges, together with a manor, containing eleven townships, and a jurisdiction, extending ten or twelve miles. This town has also a court of pleas for all actions, without limitation.

CORPORATION.

Consists of a bailiff and twenty-five burgeses.

RIGHT OF ELECTION.

1690, 12 Nov. Is in the burgeses of Radnor, Ryader, Knighton, Knucklas, and Kevenliel, only.

1769, 7 Mar. The several persons, though they had no other claim to be burgeses of the boroughs of Ryader and Knucklas, than by virtue only of a presentment made in the pretended court leet, holden under the authority of certain letters patent, which appear not to have been enrolled within the time expressly required by the said letters patent, in order to the validity thereof, ought not to have been admitted as legal voters at the last election.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.

About one thousand.

RETURNING OFFICER.

The bailiff.

PATRON.

Earl of Oxford.

HISTORY

HISTORY

OF THE

COUNTIES AND ROYAL BURGHS

OF

SCOTLAND.

INTRODUCTION.

THE political state of this kingdom was, in ancient times, like to that of most others in Europe. The lands were considered as the property of the sovereign; his barons or vassals had territories parcelled out among them, under the condition of performing service and fidelity, of supporting him in war, and obeying him and giving him counsel in peace. The lands were held by the barons (by grants or charters from the king, as original proprietor) who were obliged to appear in arms when summoned by him to battle, or to attend him in parliament, if he stood in need of their assistance, in making laws or imposing taxes.

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Taxes

Taxes were in those days granted only upon particular occasions, such as the redemption of the sovereign if a prisoner, the payment of the dowry of his eldest daughter, or the expence attending the making his eldest son a knight. To attend parliament was then accounted a duty, and a mark of the subjection of a feudal vassal; it was always accompanied with much expence, and of course, if possible, avoided.

As the king parcelled out his lands among the barons, so did they among their inferiors and dependents, under conditions similar to those which were imposed upon themselves by the sovereign. The barons had also their baron-courts, in imitation of the parliament of the kingdom, at which their vassals were obliged to appear, and where they sat and acted as judges and legislators within the territories of their lord.

A great while after the Union, it became a practice in Scotland, for the sake of acquiring political influence, to convey * a freehold estate to a friend by
fair

* It never was a practice to convey the *property of a freehold estate*, only the superiority, as aftermentioned. The law, as to the Trust-Oath, made no difference in the mode, but only obliged

fair titles, but either under a back bond, or obligation in honour, to re-convey and to use it for the grantor's advantage. To put a stop to this the Trust Oath, or Oath of Possession, was framed ; which may be put by a freeholder to any one who claims a right to vote, either at an election for a member of parliament, or at making up the roll of the freeholders of the county ; and if refused to be taken and subscribed, the name of the person refusing is to be struck off from the roll, or list of freeholders. This oath, however, does not put an end to fictitious qualifications. The most usual methods of framing them were the following * : A proprietor first feud out the lands, upon which he meant to make the qualification, to some

obliged the parties to rely upon the *understood* point of honour, instead of a promise, or back bond, as to the use to be made of the vote, and as to the restoration of the superiority when required.

* A more usual way was, for a proprietor to convey the whole lands, both property and superiority to a friend ; which friend first reconveyed the property back to the owner, and then parcelled out the superiorities, and conveyed them to the persons who were meant to have votes : this way was preferred, as avoiding any direct transaction betwixt the known owner and the new voter.

friend; he then alienated the superiorities in fee, life-rent or wadset, to the persons whom he wished to entitle to vote; after which, the friends, to whom he had feud out the lands, re-disposed them to him; and thus he gave away the bare superiority only. This act was legal in appearance, because the law of Scotland allows a man to alienate the superiority*, provided he retains the property in his lands; and it entitles the person holding the superiority to a right to vote. But in this respect it was illegal; because the persons who received such superiorities were understood, in honour, to restore the qualifications when required; which transaction is done in a way so as not to make it possible for the voter to disturb the titles of the real proprietor, and to vote under his influence.

The Court of Session, in the course of the questions which arose in consequence of the general election, in 1768, besides putting the Trust Oath, allowed several interrogatories to be put to those who claimed a right to vote, for the purpose of

* On the contrary, a man cannot alienate the superiority alone, except it appears that he is not then possessed of the property; and hence arose the various devices to alienate, in appearance, the property, previous to splitting the superiorities.

discovering

discovering the nature of the transaction. Whether the claimant had been solicited to accept of the qualification, and if it was not given merely to create a vote? Whether any thing had been truly paid for it, or was truly and *bona fide* to be paid? Who defrayed the expence of making the conveyances, &c. &c.

To such questions several persons, who had taken the Trust Oath, refused to reply, and their names were, for that reason, struck off from the rolls of freeholders. But the decisions of the House of Sessions were reversed, upon the same questions being brought by appeal before the House of Lords. It would seem, that the House of Lords, having then considered the Trust Oath as the only test of possession allowed by law, and that it exceeded their powers, as a court of justice, to adopt any other mode of proof, this was understood to be law; till at last, on the review of two questions by the House of Lords, of a like nature, different principles were adopted. In the cases of the Honourable William Elphinstone against John Campbell, Esq. and others, 30th of April, 1787, and of Sir William Forbes and others, against Sir John Macpherson, 19th of April, 1791, it was decided, “ That special in-

terrogatories might be put to those who claimed a right to vote; and if, besides taking the Trust Oath, they refused to reply, or if, from their replies, the transaction appeared to be simulate, and the vote fictitious, the claimant ought to be rejected."

It was then laid down by the court to be the law of Scotland, which it certainly is, "That the proprietor of a mere right of superiority, which entitles him only to a penny Scots yearly, is a freeholder, if he be fairly holder and possessor of that interest in the lands, such as it be*; but if, for the sake of making a vote, one person, shall only in appearance, give to another a right of superiority, while the receiver is bound in honour to vote either for

* That is, provided the lands of which he appeared to be superior are of a certain value.

The law meant to give a right to vote to every man who had lands, which had been valued at 400l. Scots, in the tax-rolls. Now any man is allowed to vote, who is superior of such an estate, though he draws but a penny or any nominal feu: but if a case can be imagined of a person's drawing a feu duty of 1000l. a year from lands valued at only 300l. Scots, that would not give him a vote. The right to vote is fixed by the value of the lands themselves, over which a man has a superiority, and not by the value of the feu duty which the superior draws from the lands.

him

him or his friend, and not to disturb the titles of the grantor, in such a case, then, is a fraud committed against the law, which may be investigated in the same way with any other question of the same kind."

The number of voters in several counties in Scotland, is not greater than in many of the rotten boroughs in England. The right of voting being thus limited, their representatives cannot be said to be fairly and impartially elected, receiving the voice of influence and power, instead of the suffrages of the people at large.

ABERDEENSHIRE.

ON the roll being made up, at a meeting which was held at Aberdeen the 21st of July, 1790, for the election of a member to serve this county in parliament, the number of freeholders, in whom the right of election is vested, appeared to be one hundred and fifty-eight; when James Ferguson, Esq. of Pitfour, was unanimously elected.

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ARGYLE-

ARGYLESHIRE.

AT the meeting held at Inverary the 19th of July, 1790, for the purpose of electing a member to represent this county in parliament, the number of voters; as appeared by the roll, was forty-three; when Lord Frederick Campbell was unanimously elected.

PATRON.—Duke of Argyle.

AYRSHIRE.

AT a meeting of freeholders, held at Ayr the 19th of July, 1790, for the election of a member to serve this county in parliament, the number of electors appeared to be two hundred and twenty; when Sir Adam Fergusson, of Kilkerron, Bart. was unanimously elected.

BAMFFSHIRE.

AT a meeting of freeholders, which was held at Bamff the 2d of July, 1790, for the election of a member to represent this county
in

in parliament, the number of voters on the roll then made up, was one hundred and eight; when Sir James Grant, of Grant, Bart. was unanimously elected.

PATRONS.—Duke of Gordon and Earl of Fife.

BERWICKSHIRE.

ON making up the roll at a meeting of freeholders, held at Greenlaw the 1st of July, 1790, for the purpose of electing a member to represent this county in parliament, the number of voters appeared to be one hundred and fifty; when Patrick Home, Esq. of Wedderburn, was unanimously elected.

SHIRE OF CAITHNESS.

ON the roll being made up, at the meeting of freeholders, held at Wick the 1st of July, 1790, for the purpose of electing a member to represent this shire in parliament, the number of voters found in the whole county was but twenty-two;

two; when Sir John Sinclair, Bart. was unanimously elected.

PATRON.—Sir John Sinclair.

SHIRE OF CROMARTY.

IN this county, according to the meeting of freeholders, held at Cromarty the 8th of July, 1790, there are but six voters

As this numerous body of voters have the exclusive privilege of electing the representatives for the county, their names may not be unacceptable to our readers.

William Pulteney, Esq. of Solway Bank.

Duncan Davidson, Esq. of Tullock.

Alexander Ross Grey, Esq. of Cromarty.

David Urquhart, Esq. of Braelangwall.

Robert Bruce Æneas Macleod, Esq. of Cadboll.

Alexander Brodie, Esq. of Brodie.

At the last general election two out of these six electors were candidates for its representation;
viz.

viz. Alexander Brodie, Esq. of Brodie, and
Duncan Davidson, Esq. of Tullock.

The following freeholders voted for Mr. Davidson.

William Pulteney, Preses.

Duncan Davidson, for himself.

Alexander Ross Grey,

The following voted for Mr. Brodie.

David Urquhart.

Robert Bruce Æneas Macleod.

Alexander Brodie, for himself.

The numbers being thus rendered equal, the Preses, William Pulteney, Esq. (according to the laws of election in Scotland) gave the casting vote to Mr. Davidson, who was of course declared duly elected.

PATRON.—Mr. Pulteney.

DUMBAR.

DUMBARTONSHIRE.

ON the roll being made up, at the meeting of freeholders, held at Dumbarton the 21st of July, 1790, for the election of a member to serve this shire in parliament, the number appeared to be sixty-five; when Sir Archibald Edmonstone, of Duntreath, Bart. was unanimously elected.

PATRON.—Hon. Keith Elphinston.

DUMFRIES-SHIRE.

ON making up the roll at a meeting of freeholders, held at Dumfries the 24th of July, 1790, the number was forty-nine. A contest then took place, for the representation of this county in parliament, between Sir Robert Lawrie, and John Johnstone, Esq. of Alva; when the numbers were, for Sir John Robert Lawrie, twenty-two, John Johnstone, Esq. thirteen; whereupon Sir Robert Lawrie was returned as duly elected.

SHIRE

SHIRE OF EDINBURGH.

ON making up the roll, at a meeting of the freeholders, held at Edinburgh, 25th June, 1790, the number of electors appeared to be ninety six; when Robert Dundas, Esq. of Arncliffe, was unanimously elected their representative in parliament.

PATRON.—Right Hon. Henry Dundas.

FIFESHIRE.

ON the roll being made up, at the meeting of freeholders, held at Cupar the 22d of July, 1790, for the purpose of electing a member to represent this shire in parliament, the number of voters was one hundred and eighty-eight; when William Wemyss, Esq. of Wemyss, was unanimously elected.

PATRON.—Earl of Fife.

FORFAR.

FORFARSHIRE.

ON the roll made up, at the meeting of freeholders, held at Forfar the 2d of July, 1790, for the purpose of electing a member to represent this shire in parliament, the number appeared to be ninety-two; when David Scott, Esq. of Dunninauld, was unanimously elected.

HADDINGTONSHIRE.

ON the roll made up, at a meeting of freeholders, held at Haddington the 28th of June, 1790, for the purpose of electing a representative to serve this county in parliament, the number was seventy-six; when John Hamilton, Esq. of Pencaitland, was unanimously elected.

INVERNESS-SHIRE.

AT a meeting of freeholders, held at Inverness the 27th of July, 1790, for the purpose of electing a representative in parliament for this county,

county, the number of voters, as appeared by the roll then made up, was one hundred and three; when Lieutenant-colonel Norman Macleod, of Macleod, was unanimously elected.

PATRON.—Duke of Gordon.

KINCARDINESHIRE.

AT a meeting of freeholders, held at Stonehaven the 14th of July, 1790, for the purpose of electing a representative in parliament for this county, the number of voters, as appeared by the roll then made up, was fifty-five; when Robert Barclay, Esq. of Urie, was unanimously elected.

KINROSS-SHIRE.

AT a meeting of freeholders, held at Kinross on the 6th of July, 1790, for the purpose of electing a representative to serve this county in parliament, the number of voters appeared to be twenty-three; when George Graham, Esq. of Kinross, was unanimously elected.

STEWARTRY

STEWARTRY OF KIRKCUDBRIGHT.

AT the meeting of freeholders, held at Kirkcudbright the 14th of July, 1790, for the purpose of electing a representative to serve this place in parliament, the number was, as appears by the roll made up, one hundred and fifty-five; when Major-general Alexander Stewart was unanimously elected.

LANERKSHIRE.

ON the roll made up, at a meeting of freeholders, held at Lanerk the 14th of July, 1790, for the purpose of electing their representative in parliament, the number of voters was one hundred and forty-eight; when Sir James Steuart Denholme, of Coltness, Bart. was unanimously elected.

LINLITHGOWSHIRE.

AT the last general election, Sir William Augustus Cunninghame, of Livingstone, and the Honourable John Hope, opposed each other

other as candidates for the representation of that county in parliament. The number of freeholders is sixty-two; of which number thirty-four voted for the Honourable John Hope, and twenty for Sir William Augustus Cunninghame; whereupon the Honourable John Hope was returned as duly elected.

SHIRE OF MORAY.

ON the roll made up, at the meeting of freeholders, held at Elgin the 5th of July, 1790, for the purpose of electing a representative to serve this county in parliament, the number of voters was seventy-seven; when Lewis Alexander Grant, Esq. of Grant, the younger, was unanimously elected.

SHIRE OF ORKNEY.

AT the last general election, a contest took place for the representation of this county, between John Balfour, Esq. Fiar of Warfater, and Colonel Thomas Dundas, of Fingask. The num-

ber of freeholders, as appears by the roll made up at the meeting held at Kirkwall, on the 28th of July, 1790, was forty; nineteen of whom voted for Mr. Balfour, and thirteen for Mr. Dundas; whereupon Mr. Balfour was returned as duly elected.

PATRON.—Sir Thomas Dundas.

PEEBLES-SHIRE.

ON the roll, made up at the meeting of freeholders, held at Peebles the 5th of July, 1790, the number of voters was thirty-seven; when Lieutenant William Montgomery was unanimously elected.

PERTHSHIRE.

AT the last general election for the representative of this county, there was a contest between Major General James Murray, of Strowan, and John Drummond, Esq. of Megginch; on which occasion the number of freeholders, as appears by the roll made up at their meeting, held
at

at Perth the 17th of July, 1790, was one hundred and forty-five; sixty-seven of whom voted for General Murray, and thirty-nine for Mr. Drummond; whereupon the General was returned as duly elected.

RENFREWSHIRE.

AT the last general election for this county, there was a contest for its representation, between John Shaw Stewart, Esq. of Greenock, and Alexander Cunninghame, Esq. of Craigends. The number of freeholders, as appears by the roll, made up at the meeting held at Renfrew the 24th of July, 1790, was one hundred and twenty-eight; twenty-two of whom voted for Mr. Stewart, and twenty-one for Mr. Cunninghame; whereupon Mr. Stewart was declared and returned as duly elected.

ROSS-SHIRE.

ON the making up of the roll, at the meeting of freeholders, held at Tain the 16th of July, 1790, for the purpose of electing a representative

to serve this shire in parliament, the number of voters was seventy-two; when William Adam, Esq. the younger, of Blair, was unanimously elected.

ROXBURGHSHIRE.

AT the last general election there was a contest for the representation of this county, between Sir George Douglas, of Springwood Park; and John Rutherford, Esq. of Edgarstoun. The number of freeholders, as appears by the roll made up at their meeting, which was held at Jedburgh the 24th of July, 1790, was eighty-one; thirty of whom voted for Sir George Douglas, and twenty-five for Mr. Rutherford; whereupon Sir George was declared duly elected.

SELKIRKSHIRE.

THE number of freeholders for this county, as appears by the roll which was made up at their meeting, held at Selkirk the 2d of July, 1790, for the purpose of electing a member to
serve

serve them in parliament, was forty; when Mark Pringle, Esq. of Fairnlie, was unanimously elected.

STIRLINGSHIRE.

AT the last general election there was a contest for the representation of this county, between Sir Alexander Campbell, of Ardkinlafs, Bart. and Sir Thomas Dundas, of Kerse, Bart. The number of freeholders, as appeared by the roll then made up, at the meeting which was held at Stirling the 6th of July, 1790, was fifty-nine; twenty-eight of whom voted for Sir Thomas Dundas, and twenty-two for Sir Alexander Campbell; whereupon Sir Thomas was returned as duly elected.

SHIRE OF SUTHERLAND.

AT the last general election, there was a contest for the representation of this county, between General James Grant, of Ballindallock, Robert Bruce Æneas Macleod, Esq. of Cadboll,

boll, and Robert Home Gordon, Esq. of Embo. The number of freeholders, as appears by the roll made up at their meeting, which was held at Dornock the 14th of July, 1790, was thirty-five; nine of whom voted for General Grant, five for Mr. Macleod, and three for Mr. Gordon; whereupon the General was returned as duly elected.

WIGTONSHIRE.

ON the roll being made up, at the meeting of freeholders, held at Wigton the 16th of July, 1790, the number appeared to be fifty-three; when Andrew M'Dowal, Esq. of Culgroat, was unanimously elected.

SHIRE OF BUTE.

AT the making up of the roll of freeholders, at a meeting held at Rothsay the 22d of April, 1784, since which time the freeholders have had no meeting, (not sending a representative to this present parliament) the number of electors appeared to be twelve.

PATRON.—Earl of Bute.

CLACK-

CLACKMANNANSHIRE.

AT a meeting of the freeholders of this county, held at Clackmannan the 29th of November, 1788, since which time they have had no meeting, (not sending a member to this present parliament) the number of voters, as appeared by the roll then made up, was sixteen.

NAIRNSHIRE.

AT a meeting of the freeholders of this county, held at Nairn in Michaelmas, 1789, since which no meeting has been held, this shire not returning a member to this parliament, the number of voters, as appeared on the roll then made up, was twenty.

SCOTCH BOROUGHS.

INTRODUCTION.

BY an act of the Scotch parliament passed in 1706, and which was afterwards engrossed in the Treaty of Union, the city of Edinburgh is allowed to elect one commissioner or representative to serve in parliament; while the rest of the boroughs, which are divided into fourteen districts, are impowered to send one to each district.

Formerly the counsellors and magistrates of the royal boroughs in Scotland were elected annually, by a poll of the burgeses, as they were in England, agreeable to the principles of our constitution; but, by an act of 1469, this mode was altered, and the old council ordered annually to choose the new one; both of which united to elect the office bearers and magistrates; but the directions of the statute having never been exactly attended to, there is now no precise rule for the election of
the

the council and magistrates of the royal boroughs generally ; each borough claiming its own political institution.

The form of proceeding at the election of the representatives of the fourteen districts of these boroughs is this. The sheriff, on receiving the writ, indorses on it the date on which it came to hand ; he then makes out a precept to every borough within his jurisdiction, requiring them to elect a commissioner to meet at the presiding borough of the district, there to assist in electing a burgess to serve in parliament. These precepts must be delivered by the sheriff to the chief magistrate residing in the borough, within four days after receiving the writ, under the penalty of 100*l.* sterling for each offence.

Under a like penalty the chief magistrates must indorse upon the precept the date of its delivery ; and, within two days, must call a meeting of the council of the borough, to fix a day, at the distance of at least two free days, for the election of a commissioner or delegate, to go to the head-borough to vote at the election of a member for the district. The council meeting for this election, then take the oath of allegiance, and sign the

the assurance; the town-clerk then takes an oath against bribery, and swears to make a faithful return. The votes being then put, the clerk is ordered to draw up a commission, to the person who has the majority, and to sign and affix to it the common seal of the borough.

The commissioners from the different boroughs, being thus chosen, meet at the presiding or head borough of the district, on the thirtieth day after the *teste* of the writ; or, if that should fall on a Sunday, on the day following, between eleven and twelve o'clock in the forenoon. The commissioner from the presiding borough then administers to the clerk of his own borough, who is also clerk of the meeting, an oath against bribery, and that he shall make a faithful return.

Having thus given a brief account of the law of Scotland, with respect to the authority which the royal boroughs have, of electing representatives to serve them in parliament, and the manner in which the delegates or commissioners are chosen and sent to the presiding borough to proceed to such election, we shall now proceed to give the names of the boroughs which compose the districts, together with the names of those persons
who

who are generally elected and returned by them to be their representatives in parliament.

The city of Edinburgh, being a place of some note, we shall, with leave of our Readers, place it at the head of the boroughs.

EDINBURGH.

POLITICAL CHARACTER.

THE mode of proceeding at the election of the member of parliament for this city is extremely simple, the right of election being in the whole magistrates and council, ordinary and extraordinary, united. The clerk (although perhaps he lies under no strict necessity by statute to do so) usually takes the oath against bribery, and to make a faithful return.

The whole is settled in a general, but rather inaccurate way, by an act of the 6th of Queen Ann, c. 6. 5. “ The Sheriff of the shire of Edinburgh shall, on the receipt of the writ, directed to him, forthwith direct his precept to the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, to cause a burghs to be elected

elected for that city ; and on the receipt of such precept, the city of Edinburgh shall elect their member ; and their common clerk shall certify his name to the sheriff of Edinburgh, who shall annex it to his writ, and return it.

The council by whom the member is elected consists of

A provost
Four bailies
Dean of guild
Treasurer
Old provost
Four old bailies
Old dean of guild
Old treasurer
Three merchant counsellors
Two trades counsellors
Six ordinary council deacons
Eight extraordinary council deacons.

These voters are all under the influence of Mr. Dundas, their present representative. The enormous patronage which this gentleman is necessarily in possession of, from the various and lucrative places which he holds under Government, insures to him the certainty of success for the representation

presentation of the city, unattended both with the trouble of canvassing and the expence of an opposition to his interest.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.—Thirty-three.

PATRON.—Right Hon. Henry Dundas.

DISTRICT I.

THIS district, of which Dingwall was the pre-
fiding borough, comprises also Dornoch, Wick,
Kirkwall, and Tain.

At the last general election, Sir Charles Ross,
of Balnagown, Bart. was unanimously elected to
represent them in parliament.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.—FIVE.

PATRON.—Sir Thomas Dundas.

DISTRICT II.

THIS district, of which Fortrose was the pre-
fiding borough, comprises also Inverness, Nairn,
and Forres.

At

At the last general election, Sir Hector Monro was unanimously elected to represent them in parliament.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.—THREE.

DISTRICT III.

THIS district, of which Elgin was the presiding borough, comprises also Bamff, Cullen, Kintore, and Inverury.

At the last general election, Alexander Brodie, Esq. was unanimously elected to represent them in parliament.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.—FIVE.

DISTRICT IV.

THIS district, of which Aberdeen was the presiding borough, comprehends also Montrose, Brechin, Aberbrothock, or Inverbervie.

At the last general election there was an opposition for the representation of these boroughs in parliament

parliament between Alexander Callender, Esq. of Crichton, and Sir David Carnegie, of Southesk. The delegates of Aberdeen, Montrose, and Inverbervie, voted for Mr. Alexander, and those of Brechin and Aberbrothock for Sir David; when Mr. Callender was elected, and duly returned.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.—FIVE.

DISTRICT V.

THIS district, of which Perth was the presiding borough, comprises also Dundee, St. Andrew's, Cupar, and Forfar.

At the last general election for these boroughs, a contest took place between Captain George Murray, of Pitkeathly, and Captain Colin Campbell, of Carwhin. The commissioners for Dundee, St. Andrew's, Cupar, and Forfar, voted for Mr. Murray, and that for Perth for Capt. Campbell; when Captain Murray was returned as duly elected.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.—FIVE.

DISTRICT

DISTRICT VI.

THIS district, of which Craill was the presiding borough, comprehends also Kilrunny, Anstruther Wester, Anstruther Easter, and Pittenween.

At the last general election there was a contest for the representation of these boroughs in parliament, between Sir John Anstruther and Thomas Erskine, Esq. late British Consul at Gottenburgh. The delegates for Anstruther Wester, Anstruther Easter, and Pittenween, voted for Sir John, and those for Craill and Kilrenny for Mr. Erskine; whereupon Sir John Anstruther was returned as duly elected.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.—FIVE.

DISTRICT VII.

THIS district, of which Kinghorn was the presiding borough, comprises also Dysart, Kirkaldie, and Bruntisland.

At the last general election there was an opposition for their representation in parliament, between

tween the Honourable Charles Hope and John Crawford, Esq. of Auchinames. The delegates for Kinghorn and Kirkaldie voted for Mr. Hope, and those for Dyfart and Bruntisland for Mr. Crawford; when Mr. Hope was elected by the casting vote of the delegate for Kinghorn, the returning borough.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.—FOUR.

DISTRICT VIII.

This district, of which Stirling was the presiding borough, comprises also Inverkeithing, Dunferline, Culrofs, and Queensferry.

At the last general election, Sir Archibald Campbell was elected without opposition.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.—FOUR.

DISTRICT IX.

This district, of which Rutherglen was the presiding borough, comprehends also Glasgow, Renfrew, and Dumbarton.

At the last general election, Mr. M'Dowal was unanimously elected.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.—FOUR.

DISTRICT X.

This district, of which Jedburgh was the presiding borough, comprises also Dunbar, North Berwick, Lauder, and Haddington.

At the last general election there was a contest for their representation between the Honourable Thomas Maitland and Colonel Fullarton. The delegates for Jedburgh and Haddington voted for Mr. Fullarton, and those for Dunbar, North Berwick and Lauder for Mr. Maitland; whereupon the latter gentleman was returned.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.—FIVE.

DISTRICT XI.

This district, of which Peebles was the returning borough, comprises also Linlithgow, Selkirk, and Lanerk.

At

At the last general election, William Grieve, Esq. was unanimously elected.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.—FOUR.

DISTRICT XII.

This district, of which Dumfries was the presiding borough, comprehends also Kirkcudbright, Annan, Lochmaben, and Sanquhar.

At the last general election there was a contest for their representation in parliament between Captain Millar, jun. of Dalswinton, and Sir James Johnstone. The delegates for Annan and Lochmaben voted for Sir James, and those for Dumfries, Kirkcudbright, and Sanquhar, for Captain Millar; whereupon Captain Millar was returned.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.—FIVE.

DISTRICT XIII.

This district, of which Whithorn was the presiding borough, comprises also New Galloway, Stranraer, and Wigton.

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At

At the last general election there was an opposition for their representation between Lord Daer and Colonel Balfour. The delegates for New Galloway and Stranraer voted for the former, and those for Whithorn and Wigton for the latter; when Colonel Balfour was declared to be duly elected, Whithorn being the returning borough.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.—FOUR.

DISTRICT XIV.

This district, of which Irvine was the returning borough, comprehends also Rothsay, Inverary, Campbellton and Ayr.

At the last general election, the Honourable Colonel Charles Stuart was unanimously elected.

NUMBER OF VOTERS.—FIVE.

A TABLE

A
T A B L E
OF THE
COUNTIES, CITIES, AND BOROUGHs,
OF
G R E A T B R I T A I N ;

SHEWING the Period at which each City and Borough first sent Members to Parliament ; the Names of those Places which have lost that invaluable Privilege ; the Time that each of the existing Boroughs have been deprived of their exclusive Rights ; and the different Reigns in which they have been restored.

N. B. The Names printed in *Italic* are the obsolete Boroughs.

Counties, Cities, and Boroughs.	When first summoned.	When discon- tinued	When restor- ed.
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BEDFORDSHIRE.

Dunstable - - - 4 Edw. II.

Bedford - - - 23 Edw. I.

BERKSHIRE.

Newberry - - - 30 Edw. I. 11 Edw. III.

Windfor - - - Ditto 14 Edw. III. 7 Edw. IV.

Reading - - - 23 Edw. I.

Wallingford - - - Ditto

Abingdon - - - 11 Edw. III. 12 Edw. III. 4 & 5 W. & M.

[E]

Counties, Cities, and Boroughs.	When first summoned.	When discontinued.	When restored.
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.			
Buckingham - - -	11 Edw. III.	12 Edw. III.	36 H. VIII.
Wycomb - - -	28 Edw. I.	17 Edw. IV.	33 H. VIII.
Aylesbury - - -	1 Mary		
Agmondesham - - -	28 Edw. I.	2 Edw. II.	21 James I.
Wendover - - -	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Marlow - - -	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
CAMBRIDGESHIRE.			
Ely - - - - -	23 Edw. I.	27 Edw. III.	
Wipbeac - - - -			
Cambridge University	1 James I.		
<u>Town</u> - - - -	23 Edw. I.	17 Edw. IV.	33 H. VIII.
CHESHIRE.			
	1 Edw. VI.		
Chester - - - -	Ditto		
CORNWALL.			
Polurun - - - -	11 Edw. III.	12 Edw. III.	
Launceston - - -	23 Edw. I.		
Leskard - - - -	Ditto	17 Edw. IV.	1 Edw. VI.
Leftwithiel - - -	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Truro - - - -	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Bodmin - - - -	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Helston - - - -	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
Saltafh - - - -	6 Edw. VI.		
Camelford - - - -	Ditto		
Westlooe - - - -	Ditto		
Grampound - - - -	Ditto		
Eastlooe - - - -	14 Edw. III.	14 Edw. III.	13 Eliz.
Penryn - - - -	1 Mary		
Tregoney - - - -	23 Edw. I.	33 Edw. I.	1 Eliz.
Bossiney - - - -	6 Edw. VI.		
St. Ives - - - -	4 & 5 P. & M.		
Fowey - - - -	14 Edw. III.	14 Edw. III.	13 Eliz.
St. Germans - - -	5 Eliz.		

Counties, Cities, and Boroughs.	When first summoned.	When discontinued.	When restored.
WORCESTERSHIRE.			
<i>Bromsgrove</i> - - -	23 Edw. I.	24 Edw. I.	
<i>Dudley</i> - - -	Do.	Do.	
<i>Kidderminster</i> - - -	Do.	Do.	
<i>Perthore</i> - - -	Do.	Do.	
<i>Worcester</i> - - -	Do.		
<i>Droitwich</i> - - -	Do.	5 Edw. II.	Ph. & M.
<i>Evesham</i> - - -	Do.	24 Edw. I.	1 Jac. I.
<i>Bewdley</i> - - -	Jac. I.		

YORKSHIRE.

<i>Doncaster</i> - - -	23 Edw. I.	24 Edw. I.	
<i>Fervale</i> - - -	Do.	Do.	
<i>Pickering</i> - - -	Do.	Do.	
<i>Ravensthorpe</i> - - -	33 Edw. I.	12 Edw. III.	
<i>Tykeshall</i> - - -	23 Edw. I.	24 Edw. I.	
<i>Hallifax</i> - - -	Commonw.		
<i>Whitby</i> - - -	Do.		
<i>Leeds</i> - - -	Do.		
<i>York</i> - - -	Do.		
<i>Hull</i> - - -	33 Edw. I.	34 Edw. I.	12 Edw. II.
<i>Knareborough</i> - - -	1 Mary		
<i>Scarborough</i> - - -	23 Edw. I.		
<i>Rippon</i> - - -	Do.	24 Edw. I.	1 Edw. II.
		2 Edw. II.	Edw. VI.
<i>Heydon</i> - - -	Do.	24 Edw. I.	1 Edw. VI.
<i>Boroughbridge</i> - - -	1 Mary		
<i>Aldborough</i> - - -	5 Ph. & M.		
<i>Malton</i> - - -	23 Edw. I.	27 Edw. I.	Cha. II.
<i>Thirsk</i> - - -	Do.	24 Edw. I.	1 Edw. VI.
<i>Beverley</i> - - -	Do.	1 Edw. II.	5 Eliz.
<i>Northallerton</i> - - -	26 Edw. I.	27 Edw. I.	Cha. II.
<i>Pontefract</i> - - -	23 Edw. I.	Do.	19 Jac. I.
<i>Richmond</i> - - -	27 Eliz.		

Counties, Cities, and Boroughs.	When first summoned.	When discontinued.	When restored.
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CINQUE PORTS.

Hastings	- - - -	43 Edw. III.	
Dover	- - - -	Do.	
Sandwich	- - - -	Do.	30 Edw. I.
Hythe	- - - -	Do.	16 Edw. II.
New Romney	- - - -	Do.	19 Edw. II.
Rye	- - - -	43 Edw. III.	18 Ric. II.
Winchelsea	- - - -	Do.	20 Ric. II.
Scaford	- - - -	26 Edw. I.	1 Hen. IV.
		27 Edw. I.	16 Car. I.
		31 Edw. I.	
		17 Edw. II.	
		20 Edw. II.	
		19 Ric. II.	
		21 Ric. II.	
		2 Hen. IV.	

Calais in France. 27 Hen. VIII. 3 Ph. & M.

WALES.

Twelve Counties - }
Twelve Boroughs - } 27 Hen. VIII

SCOTLAND.

Thirty Counties - }
Fifteen Boroughs - } 6 Anne

By the above Table it appears that SEVENTY-ONE boroughs, exclusive of Calais in France, which formerly sent members to parliament, are now disfranchised; and that boroughs have been created and annihilated, from the reign of Edward I. to that of Charles II. at the whim of each successive monarch. We may here be allowed to ask the enemies of reform, whether the constitution would receive a greater injury from the disfranchisement of Old Sarum, Gatton, Castle Rising, or Midhurst, than it has at present sustained from the disqualification of Leeds or Manchester. It surely becomes necessary to abolish the existing rotten boroughs, or, according to the argument of our opponents, to make the constitution complete, by restoring the seventy-one which have been discontinued.

HAVING exhibited a picture of the deformity of the present system of representation, we wish, before we close the subject, to lead our readers to the more pleasing contemplation of a perfect one. The plan adopted by the Westminster Committee of Association, and that introduced into Parliament by the Duke of Richmond in 1780, being, in principle and essence, the same, we devote our production to the purpose of disseminating a knowledge of them amongst the people, satisfied that a reform, so universally admitted to be essential to the existence of our liberty, has been so little attended to, owing to its having been so little known. The venom of corruption, which infuses its poison into every branch of the present system, like liquid fire in the sea, would be obliterated among the great mass of the people.

Report of the Sub-Committee of Westminster, appointed April 12, 1780, to take into consideration all such matters, relative to the election of Members of Parliament, as may promote the purposes of the present Association.

Free Masons Tavern, May 27th, 1780.

THE Sub-committee having duly examined the various statutes of this realm respecting the election of members to serve in the Commons' House of Parliament, more particularly such as were enacted for the purpose of guarding against the prevalence of bribery and corruption at elections, and the operation of every other species of undue influence upon the electors and elected; and reflecting upon the inefficacy of these provisions with respect to the prevention of evils, which threaten the final extinction of our liberties, are decidedly of opinion, that no effectual reformation of the abuses in question can take place, unless the people exercise their inherent and undoubted right of reviewing the whole plan of delegation, and by recurring to the first principles of our constitution, again establish it upon its ancient foundations of equity and right reason.

When

When error has obtained the sanction of time, it appears to the unthinking mind under the semblance of truth ; and even men of reflection, who have formed a just conception of its nature and its tendency, are in such circumstances alarmed with apprehensions at the first attempts for its correction. However, as the consequences of error, in proportion to its magnitude and extent of operation, are manifestly evil, and as constitutional errors may therefore be supposed to be unavoidably productive of national calamity, it is surely more prudent, in the proper season, to submit to the perhaps imaginary inconveniencies of a reformation, than to suspend our exertions, until we are obliged to encounter those accumulated miseries, which an obstinate perseverance, in an acknowledged course of error, must derive upon both prince and people.

The prevalence of evil in the present hour proves the prevalence of error ; and it does not require any extraordinary degree of sagacity in the politician and philosopher to discover, that the primary error, and the fruitful source of the many evils which we feel, consists in a departure from fundamental principles, in the present constitution of the Commons' House of Parliament : in con-

sequence of which, it is no longer obedient to the will, or speaks the language of the great constituent body of the people.

Every application, therefore, for the redress of the present grievances of the nation, that shall be made to a body of men, no longer under the influence of their constituents, but on the contrary uniformly acting in subserviency to the views and interests of the crown, must of necessity be unsuccessful; and, from the natural effect of disappointment upon the human mind, will probably impair the vigour of every future exertion.

Application to the crown to suspend the exertion of its influence, or to repair the breaches made in that part of the constitution, which was intended to be the bulwark of the people against its encroachments, pre-supposes such an ignorance of the principles, which, in certain circumstances, are found invariably to actuate the human heart, that one would be led to imagine the use of argument would be superseded by the obvious absurdity of the expedient.

The event of the experiment, frequently repeated, has confirmed the conclusion which right reason would have suggested; and it now stands a truth,

truth, recorded for the benefit of every future generation, that when the point in question is a redress of grievances, originating in oppression, or a restitution of the rights and privileges of the people, millions sue in vain.

To what earthly tribunal therefore shall an injured people have resort in this alarming moment, when a desperate faction, in the midst of public calamity and distress, has manifested a determined purpose of persevering in a line of conduct, which, if persisted in, must inevitably end in the subversion of our liberties, and the desolation of our state? The sun of England's glory perhaps soon may set to rise no more!

One hope still remains in the native energy of the great collective body of the people, the native energy of a race of men, who have always stood distinguished in the annals of nations for every liberal sentiment, and every generous principle that can dignify our kind.

The peaceful efforts of this mighty power, acting by committees freely chosen, are sufficient, under the providence of Heaven, to re-establish the constitution in its ancient vigour. The public state of affairs requires this exertion; the public
voice

voice at length appears disposed to bear its testimony to this important truth, viz.

That the restoration of the Commons' House of Parliament to freedom and independency, by interposition of the great collective body of the nation, is essentially necessary to our existence as a free people.

The 'circumstances of the times, and the peculiar nature of the means, which must be employed for effecting our deliverance, require, that the proposed plan be exhibited complete in all its essential forms; and that its various parts, being combined in strict and necessary union with each other, be established at one and the same moment of time.

When we cast our eyes upon the conduct of the present Commons' House of Parliament; when we behold a majority of its members, in defiance of our petitions, and their own solemn declaration, persist in encreasing the burdens of the people, and in a stedfast purpose of opposing every measure of redress, desponding apprehensions may for a time take place in the minds of the best and bravest of our countrymen. Reflection, however, will disclose a more pleasing prospect arising from the very extremity of our distress; more vigorous
counsels,

counsels, and an happy unanimity will be the unavoidable result ; the alarm of the nobility for the very existence of their present splendid distinctions will co-operate with the poignant feelings of the people ; and every rank and description of men will feel the propriety, the necessity of establishing that plan of parliamentary reformation, which hold forth our best, and indeed our only security, against the all-devouring influence of the crown.

Political truth, like the moral feelings of the soul, is plain and simple ; it recommends itself powerfully to the general sentiment : and, when unveiled in its intrinsic purity, will assuredly call forth the animated exertion of millions in its support.

An equal representation of the people in the great council of the nation, annual elections, and the universal right of suffrage, appear so reasonable to the natural feelings of mankind, that no sophistry can elude the force of the arguments which are urged in their favour ; and they are rights of so transcendent a nature, that, in opposition to the claim of the people to their enjoyment, the longest period of prescription is pleaded in vain. They were substantially enjoyed in the times

times of the immortal Alfred ; they were cherished by the wisest princes of the Norman line ; they form the grand palladium of our nation ; they ought not to be esteemed the grant of Royal favour, nor were they at first extorted by violence from the hand of power : they are the birthright of Englishmen, their best inheritance, which, without the complicated crimes of treason to their country, and injustice to their posterity, they cannot alienate or resign : they form that triple cord of strength, which alone can be relied on to hold, in times of tempest, the vessel of the state.

With respect to the expediency of reforming the representation of that country, and of recurring to the constitutional practice of annually electing the persons sent to parliament, the Sub-committee observe,

That the General Meeting of the deputies, on the 17th of March, decided, in the affirmative, upon the propriety of these measures, with unanimous voice ; that the committee from which this body received its instructions, have, with similar unanimity, given their suffrages to the same sentiment ; and that the General Meeting of the inhabitants of Westminster upon the 6th of April declared, “ That the people of England
have,

have, and always had, a clear, unalienable, indefeasible right to an annual election of their representatives, as well as to an adequate and equal representation, founded upon stronger grounds than that of any act or acts of parliament; and that the attainment of these important constitutional objects is the most effectual expedient for restoring and securing the independency of parliament."

With regard to the restitution of the universal right of suffrage the Sub-committee conceive, that the reasonableness and expediency of the measure will probably be more apparent, if the full extent and magnitude of those powers be considered, which are entrusted to the representative by the constituent body.

The doctrine that representation and taxation are inseparable, is founded in truth; but the undue preference that has been afforded to the rights of property, in various discussions of this subject, has tended to keep out of sight other principles, equally essential to a just conception of this question.

A portion of the soil, a portion of its produce, may be wanting to many; but every man has an
interest

interest in his life, his liberty, his kindred, and his country ; and when laws affecting these are made by persons, to whom he hath not delegated the power, each of these possessions, which are as substantial, as if, like land or money, they were objects of the senses, may be invaded, and probably would be invaded by those, who, being possessed of property, the grand enchantress of the world, would thereby be enabled more successfully to gratify that lust of despotic power, which so strongly characterises the human heart.

The exercise of the poor man's elective right is therefore essential to his freedom ; and although, in ordinary cases, he may sometimes dispose of his suffrage without a proper regard to its importance, yet, when public calamity demonstrates that public confidence has been abused, the opportunity of rectifying the evil by a more judicious delegation will probably not be neglected. Common-sense will instruct him that his own free and unbiassed voice, united with the voices of that numerous class of fellow citizens, who are his fellow sufferers, at such a period, will prevail over the interested opposition of the tyrants of their species, and finally establish the real friends of humanity and of their country in the seat of power.

It

It may also be observed, that no consideration would have a stronger tendency to generate proper sentiments of affection to the community, and more effectually recall the minds of the rising generation from a course of dissipation and attachment to unworthy gratifications, than the perception of that share of political consequence, which the restitution of the universal right of suffrage would afford.

At a certain age all the male inhabitants of this kingdom, with a few exceptions, are subject to the obligation of serving in the Militia. Shall a man therefore be thought unworthy of a suffrage in the election of his representative, and at the same time shall his fellow citizens intrust to his fidelity and courage whatever they hold dear? Is it reasonable to deny to a citizen, when he has attained to maturity in his mental capacity, the common privilege of a freeman, the right of being governed by laws, to which the assent of himself or his representative has been obtained, and at the same time to avail ourselves of his bodily strength? Is it generous, is it politic, to treat him as an alien in the community, at the moment he may be ornamenting it by the powers of his understanding, or defending it by his arms?

Urged

Urged by the force of these reflections, your Sub-committee have considered the points proposed to their deliberation in their full extent. They have examined the voluminous system of laws relating to the subject of parliamentary elections, and find themselves under a necessity of pronouncing the far greater part of them to be founded upon partial conceptions, unjust restrictions, and false measures of expediency, which will not stand the test when contrasted by the acknowledged principles of the constitution of this country.

More particularly, it appears to your Sub-committee,

1. That through the joint operation of the statute of disfranchisement, passed in the eighth year of the reign of Henry VI. and the triennial bill of the sixth of William and Mary, which attempted to give the first legal sanction to the continuance of the same parliament beyond the period of a single session, the representation of the Commons of England is virtually annihilated; and an institution, which was intended to be the people's defence against aristocratic domination, or regal despotism, is now become an engine in the hands

hands of the minister, to tax, oppress, insult, and enslave the people of this country.

2. That the present inequality in the representation, in a great measure originates in an arbitrary exercise of the royal prerogative, whereby, in opposition to the clearest principles of the constitution, the crown presumed to authorize, at pleasure, certain incorporated bodies to send members to the Commons' House of Parliament; the unsuspecting people of this country at the same time not attending to the inequality, that from thence must necessarily take place in the representation, to the substantial injury of themselves, and every succeeding generation.

That in consequence of the decay of many of these corporations, and through the partiality of the crown in various periods of our history to its own tenants and dependants, there is at this time a degree of representation enjoyed by many boroughs of this kingdom, far exceeding the bounds of due proportion, and too dangerous to the public freedom to be longer endured.

3. That more than seventy acts of parliament have been passed since the first invasion of the liberties of Englishmen in the reign of Henry VI.

II. That the division of the county into districts be constituted in such a manner, that each district contain nearly an equal number of males competent to vote in elections ; regard being had, as much as may be, to the parochial divisions of the kingdom, so that each division comprehend a certain number of parishes : and moreover, that each district receive its denomination from the parish containing the greatest number of electors.

III. That the election of representatives to serve in Parliament be held annually through England and Wales, upon the first Tuesday in July : that the election commence between the hours of eight and eleven, and be finally closed before sun-set of the same day.

IV. That all the male inhabitants of this country (aliens, minors, criminals, and insane persons excepted) be admitted to vote at the election of representatives, subject only to the forms, provisions, and regulations specified in this report.

V. That the number of representatives, returned by the inhabitants of each county of England and Wales, be settled for the term of seven years next ensuing, according to the following schedule, viz.

That

That the county of Rutland, and the two universities, return each two representatives,	—	—	—	2—6
The counties of Huntingdon and Westmoreland, each three,	—	—	—	3—6
The county of Bedford five,	—	—	—	5—5
Berkshire, Cumberland, Herefordshire, each six,	—	—	—	6—18
Bucks, Cambridgehire with Ely, Hertfordshire, Dorset, Nottinghamshire, Oxfordshire, each seven,	—	—	—	7—42
Leicestershire	—	—	—	8—8
Suffex, Warwickshire, Worcesterhire, each nine,	—	—	—	9—27
Cheshire, Cornwall, Derbyshire, Northamptonshire, Salop, Staffordshire, each ten,	—	—	—	10—60
Hampshire, Wilts, each eleven,	—	—	—	11—22
Gloucestershire thirteen,	—	—	—	13—13
Effex, Surrey with Southwark, each sixteen,	—	—	—	16—32
Lincolnshire seventeen,	—	—	—	17—17
Kent, Lancashire, Somerset, Suffolk, each eighteen,	—	—	—	18—72
Durham bishopric with Northumberland, Devon, each twenty-one,	—	—	—	21—42
Norfolk twenty-two,	—	—	—	22—22
Wales with Monmouth, thirty,	—	—	—	30—30
				Middlesex

Middlesex with London and Westminster, forty-five,	—	—	—	45—45
Yorkshire forty-six,	—	—	—	46—46
				<hr/>
Total				513
				<hr/>

VI. That an exact roll be kept of the male inhabitants competent to vote in each parish, continued down to the first Tuesday in June; and that no person be permitted to give his suffrage, whose name is not found in that roll. That this roll be delivered in upon oath of the clergyman, churchwardens, or other officers of the parish, to the churchwardens of that parish of the district where the poll is taken.

VII. That the sheriff, together with all the justices of the peace, mayor, aldermen, and magistrates, form in each county a grand inquest, for allotting the districts in due proportion to the male inhabitants competent to vote, and for denominating the same: and that such inquest be finally settled, and notice of the allotment given to each parish comprehended in the district, within the term of ten days after the first Tuesday in June.

VIII. That

VIII. That the election of the representatives of the people be made at the principal town or village of the district.

IX. That the poll of each district be taken by ballot, under the conduct of the churchwardens of the parish in the district where the election is made.

X. The churchwardens of the district, at the close of the poll, shall declare the name of the person elected, and certify the same to the sheriff, in order to its being transmitted to the clerk of the crown in Chancery.

XI. That the annual sessions of Parliament shall commence upon the first Thursday in November, unless some extraordinary event, or urgent national business, should make it indisputably requisite for the crown to assemble it before the stated period.

XII. That the session terminate upon the last day of April, unless the national business should be sooner dispatched; the crown, nevertheless, having power to prolong the session beyond the stated period, if any urgent business remain unfinished;

finished ; in which case, the Parliament may continue its sitting to the first Tuesday in July.

XIII. That all the Members of the Commons' House of Parliament, before taking their seats, declare upon oath, That they do not hold any office or emolument at the will of the crown, or its servants, or any lord of parliament ; that they will give due attendance to business, and act with all fidelity to the people in the discharge of their important trust.

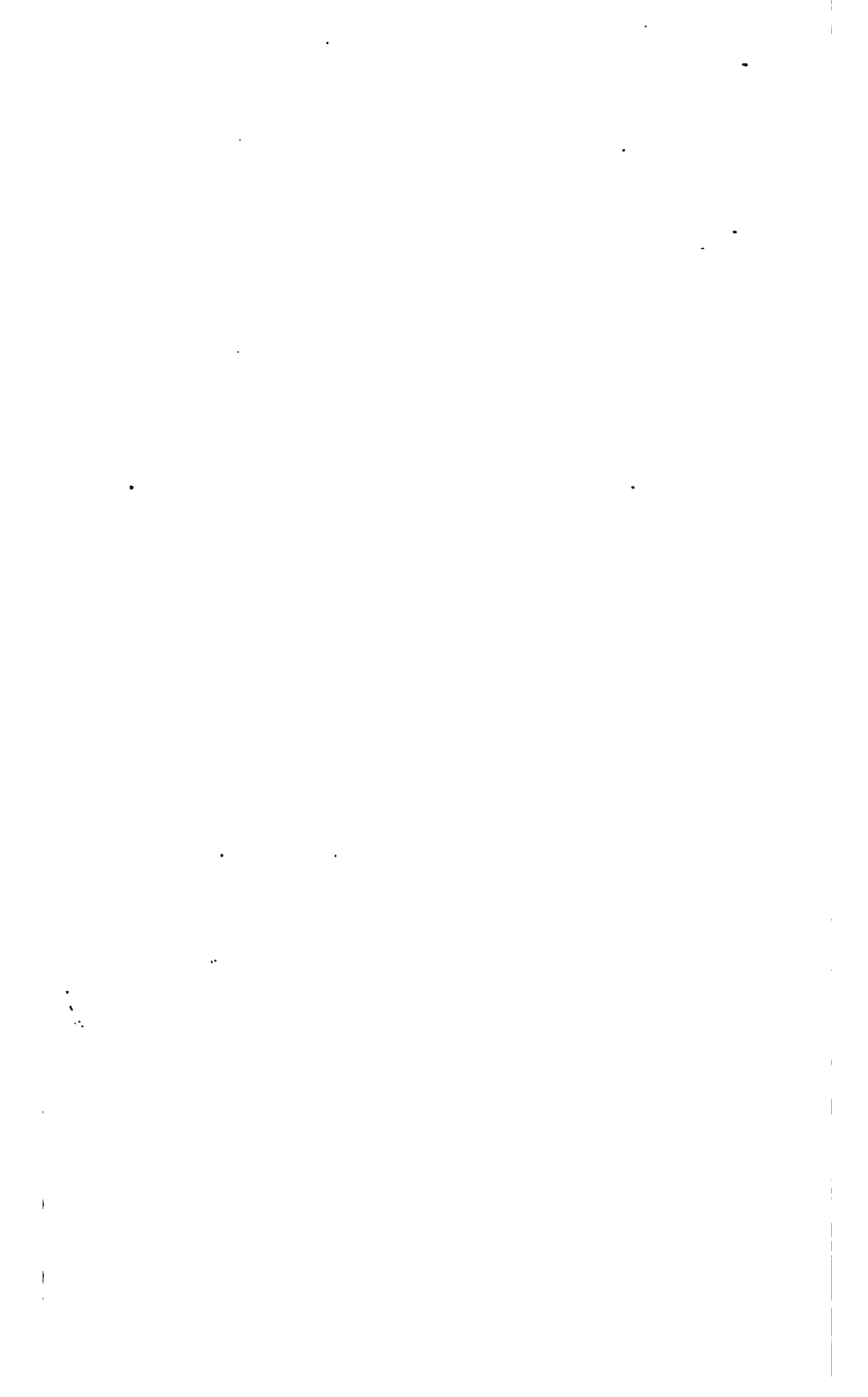
XIV. That all members serving in Parliament be intitled to reasonable wages, according to the wholesome practice of ancient times.

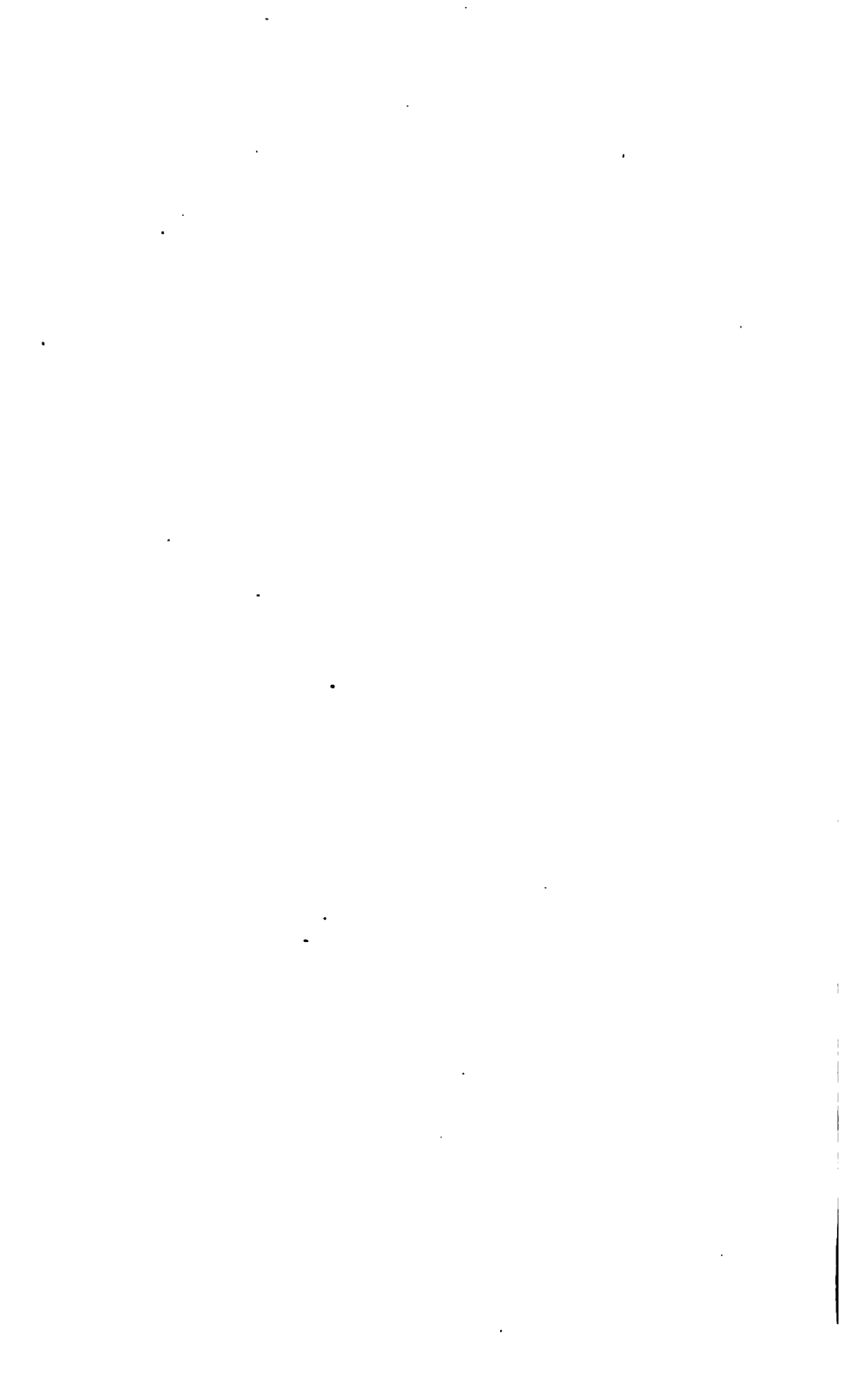
XV. That all election causes be finally decided by jury before the Judges of Assize.

XVI. That every person competent to give his suffrage as an elector, be also esteemed qualified to be elected to serve his country in Parliament.

T. BRAND HOLLIS, Chairman.









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